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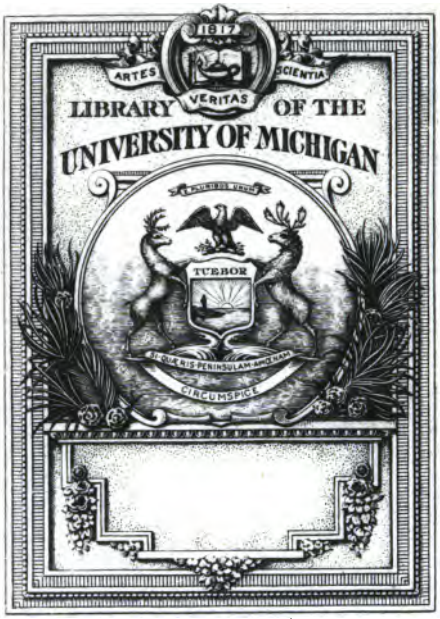

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Mornings in the College Chapel

SECOND SERIES

Mornings in the College Chapel

SHORT ADDRESSES TO YOUNG MEN ON PERSONAL RELIGION BY FRANCIS GREENWOOD PEABODY, PLUMMER PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN MORALS IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Second Series

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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To G. A. G.

TWENTY YEARS AGO WE WERE SET TO KEEP THE LIGHT;
FIVE OF US SHARED THE WATCH THROUGH THE FIRST LONG WINTER'S NIGHT:
ONE, OUR CAPTAIN, SANK IN DUTY'S PITILESS FOAM,
TWO, OUR VETERANS, WAIT BY THE SHORE FOR THEIR SUMMONS HOME.
THE YEARS AND THE FACES PASS, AND THE KEEPERS COME AND GO
LIKE THE SEA OF LIFE BENEATH THEM, WITH ITS CEASELESS EBB AND FLOW.
STILL AT YOUR POST YOU STAND, HIGH UP IN THE LIGHT-HOUSE TOWER,
GUARDING THE WAY OF LIFE, SPEAKING THE WORD OF POWER;
RESOLUTE, TENDER, WISE, FREE IN THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH,
TENDING THE FLAME OF THE CHRIST, AS IT MARKS THE CHANNEL OF YOUTH.
AND THE TASK WE WERE SET, MY BROTHER, HAS IT FAILED IN THESE TWENTY YEARS,
HAS THE LIGHT GONE OUT IN THE NIGHT OF DOUBT, OR THE SMOTHERING FOG OF FEARS?
THANK GOD, IN THE SHIFTING TIDES OF LIFE, THE TOWER OF PRAYER STILL STANDS,
AND IN HIS NAME THE UNDIMMED FLAME IS FED BY LOYAL HANDS.
WHAT SHALL WE PLEDGE TO THE COLLEGE WHICH TRUSTED US SO, MY FRIEND,
BUT A LOVING PRAYER, AND A CONSTANT CARE TO SERVE HER TILL THE END?

Twenty years is a long time to be the minister of one congregation; and when that congregation, instead of being a fixed quantity, is a passing procession of young men, marching swiftly through their college years, then a pace of leadership becomes necessary which is likely to slacken as one's own youth drops behind him into the past. It seemed to me prudent, therefore, to withdraw last year from the administration of the College Chapel, and to commit to younger hands a task which had been at once a daily anxiety and a daily privilege. When one recalls the venture of faith made by the University in 1886, it is reassuring to observe that this venture has become, through the generous devotion of successive staffs of Preachers, a part of the established order of University life. Reversion to a plan of compulsory worship is quite unthinkable, and the abandonment of worship seems equally improbable. A whole generation of college men have been trained in the belief that religion has a legitimate place among the interests of the University and need ask for nothing but a chance to do its work. The problem of Christian unity has been, not so much solved, as not encountered. Given a large enough work to do, and men large enough to do it, and the unity which might seem the end to be reached happens on the way. The coöperation of preachers from various communions, and their residence as pastors,

have seemed to many other universities and colleges to provide the most practicable and effective method for the administration of religion in an institution of learning. Thus, the future problems of the Harvard plan seem likely to be, not those of existence or of justification, but of expansion and efficiency.

In the precious little volume where the Preachers to the University have confidentially recorded their experiences, Phillips Brooks, on December 3, 1886, wrote as follows: "Soon after I began my term of service, the 'Crimson' suggested that a short talk, or address, from the Preacher at Morning Prayers would add to the interest of the service. This was followed by two or three letters from students in the 'Crimson,' expressing the same idea. I accepted the suggestion and have said a few words before the prayer, not regularly but twice or three times a week, not, however, thereby lengthening the total service." That was the beginning of a custom which soon became a regular practice, of adding to our morning prayers a few plain words on the problems of life and faith with which young men find themselves confronted. In 1896 I collected some of my short addresses as a kind of Apologia *for a work which then seemed to need explanation, and, now that my share in this work is done, a second series may serve as a kind of valedictory to these happy mornings in the College Chapel.*

CAMBRIDGE, September, 1907.

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Mornings in the College Chapel

I

THE SOUL AND THE WORLD

Matthew xvi. 26.

WHEN one begins his day with worship, he may well ask himself what this pause in his busy life can mean to a modern man. What is the justification of worship in a world of work? Why do we stop to pray? The answer to these questions is in the saying of Jesus: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" You cannot, in other words, be said to gain anything unless you have also gained the capacity to own and use it. The world is profitless unless it is possessed by the soul. You do not, for instance, gain money by merely making money, for it may easily happen that instead of your owning the money, the money may

own you. "Wealth," Ruskin said, "is the possession of the valuable by the valiant," and he tells of a man in a wreck who tied about his waist a belt with two hundred pounds of gold pieces in it, with which he was later found at the bottom. Of such a man, Ruskin asks, "As he was sinking, had he the gold or had the gold him?" It is the same with the life of learning. You do not become a scholar by accumulating information any more than you become rich by accumulating money. Truth needs a soul to interpret it as money needs a soul to use it. A heap of information is no more learning than a heap of money is wealth. A walking encyclopædia is no more a scholar than a portable safe-deposit box is a rich man. A man may be very learned and yet very stupid, just as a man may be very money-making and yet very poor. The world is precious as it is owned by the soul.

What, then, is the purpose of worship? It is to restore the balance of life; to save the soul from the world, and to see the world with the soul; to set things in perspective, so that the large things of life shall look large and the small things shall look small. Much of one's time is occupied in making a living. In

one's worship he asks: "Am I at the same time making a life?" Much of the time a student is learning truths; in his worship he asks: "Am I at the same time learning the Truth which makes men free?" Matthew Arnold said of Sophocles that he "saw things steadily and saw them whole." That is what the habit of worship permits one to do. We see things for the most part distortedly, fragmentarily, hastily; in our prayers we see them steadily and see them whole. Holiness is wholeness, and the soul is holy because it sees things whole. Thus a rational being begins his day with a thought of prayer, not because he expects an outright answer to all his desires or fears, but because he wants to stand for a moment where the whole of life lies before his view. Then, with a sense of grasp and freedom, he goes out to the work of the day, and the world is his because he owns a soul, and his soul is safe because it owns the world.

II

THE DOOR

John x. 7.

"I AM the door," says Jesus, — "I am the door of the sheep." There are two kinds of religion, which face, as it were, toward opposite sides of life. One kind of religion gives life its rest, the other kind sets life in motion. One is the religion of repose, the other is the religion of activity. One is the religion of age, the other is the religion of youth. To one condition of life Jesus says, "I am the truth," and we turn to that which is conclusive, satisfying, restful. To another condition of life Jesus says, "I am the door," and we look through that door to progress, opportunity, a larger room. Both kinds of religion are real. What many lives need is rest, refuge, a peaceful harbor after the storms of life. To many other lives, however, the restfulness of religion is precisely what makes it seem remote and undesirable. What a vigorous, healthy, happy youth desires is not rest but movement, not security but opportunity, not a harbor of

refuge but the large adventures of the open sea. You watch a battered wreck towed into port and say: "Take her to some safe dock and moor her where no storm can come, for she is too weather-beaten to go to sea." But when you see a sturdy vessel standing out into the bay, you say: "There goes a craft that laughs at storms. Her captain's business is not to lie in port, but to know his course and steer it true, and find his port across the sea." It is a picture of the eager, expectant life of youth, not yet ready for the religion of rest, but asking for guidance into the beckoning, even if threatening, unknown. To such a life comes this word of Jesus: "I am the door. I show the way, I give the course to steer. My message is not one of peace alone, but of initiative, action, opportunity, a message fit for a restless, self-distrustful, forward-looking, normal, modern youth."

"I am the door." It is very curious to notice, as one goes on in life, how often one's experience is like passing into successive rooms in some ample house through opening and closing doors. You enter one room and the door shuts behind, and you seem shut in; but, suddenly, at a point where the wall seems

blank and impenetrable, another door opens and you go on into a larger room. Your education or your business seems a restricted, disciplinary, shut-in task, in which there is no spaciousness or outlet; and yet, through the narrow vestibule of this limited task, the door opens beyond, and you find that the entrance to the larger work could have been reached in no other way. You do the small work, and the door opens to the large privilege. You do your duty, and it is the door to your opportunity. You bear your trouble, and the door opens into the capacity to bear others' troubles. You live your life like a man, and death is but the opening of a door into a larger life worth a man's having. And this is what makes life so full of dramatic surprise, — that ever the little which is known is the door to the great unknown, and the little one can do is the way to worthier doing. That is the story of multitudes of lives, — the story of life's opening doors. And this is the promise with which Jesus Christ meets the beginner in religion. "I do not promise you," he says, "that all your questions shall be at once answered or all your future made plain. My first promise to you is this, that instead of a meagre, repressed,

insignificant life, you shall have horizon, liberty, movement, power. Religion is not restrictive and penal, but enlarging and emancipating. It does not shut you in; it lets you out. It opens the door through routine and drudgery to spaciousness and vision. The first message of religion to the unsatiated life of youth is the summons to enter life's larger rooms. "In my Father's house are many mansions; I am the door."

III

THE PRAYER-HABIT

Luke xi. 1.

"LORD, teach us to pray." It has often been debated whether Jesus in this passage meant to prescribe the Lord's Prayer as a form, or to suggest it as a type; whether he was dictating a rule, or announcing a principle. However this question may be determined, it is plain that his friends came to him to learn the secret of his own prayer, and to acquire for themselves the habit which was his. He had been praying, the record says, in a certain place, and his disciples say: "Teach us how we may gain for ourselves this refreshment and calm which the habit of prayer gives to you."

Nothing is more surprising in one's experience of life than the increasing domination of habit; and nothing becomes more evident as one grows older than the fact that if one does not do a thing habitually, he soon loses the capacity to do it at all. You see a man of books faithfully taking his physical exercise,

pulling stupid weights and running weary miles, and it appears a very ludicrous and irksome task; yet the man knows that if he does not keep his muscles tense and supple, he will soon lose not only the capacity for exercise, but also the inclination to it, until at last, the harder he works at his books, the less he will really do. The same fact may be seen in the intellectual life. There are few more impressive paragraphs in biography than the passage in which Mr. Darwin tells how he was once passionately fond of music, but through abandoning the habit of hearing it, he at last came to find it jarring and unwelcome. His mind, he said, had become atrophied on this side of life, and had made him a machine for observing and registering facts. The same law holds in the deeper experiences of the religious life. We hear much of the reasons which lead men to abandon prayer, but in most such instances the loss of the prayer-habit does not happen because of profound philosophizing or serious conviction, but through sheer inertia. There are so many other things to do, that, as a young man once said, "One does not get round to his prayers." Thus one has to live on a

left-over piety, inherited in his blood, just as a man sometimes lives on a left-over constitution, earned by his father or his grandfather. Then some sudden attack of passion or desire comes upon one, like a sudden attack of disease, and the left-over capacity is not strong enough to resist the strain.

When a naval vessel is about to begin her voyage, the last duty of the captain is the scrupulous adjustment of the vessel's compasses. The great ship is warped over into some quiet bay, where no ripple of the waves disturbs her equilibrium, and there the bearings of each compass are carefully noted, and each deflecting influence is computed or removed. Then at last the ship is ready for sea. Such is the act of prayer. It is an adjusting of the compass of life. A place of prayer is a compass-station. A man enters this quiet bay in the sea of life and pauses to set himself right with the Eternal. "Lord," he says, "teach me to pray." He does not anticipate that the storms of life shall be made calm for him. He knows that he is to sail under sealed orders and to navigate unexplored seas; but he adjusts the needle of his will to the intention of the Universe; and then with

confidence and hope steers forth to meet the vicissitudes of life, because the habit of his mind points steadily toward the unchangeable will of God.

IV

THE FRAGMENTARINESS OF LIFE

1 *Corinthians* xiii. 10.

ONE of the most perplexing impressions of daily experience is the sense of the fragmentariness of life. You begin the day with a well-considered plan. It is to be a consistent, symmetrical, harmonious whole. You are to achieve something substantial and finished. Then, at the end of the day, you look back on its experiences and they seem chiefly made up of interruptions. The thing you had planned to do has been hardly approached; your life has been distracted by divisive duties, and the hours which you had hoped to bind into unity lie behind you in disconnected fragments. Something of this impression came to the Apostle as he surveyed the experiences of life. "We know," he says, "in part," "we see but darkly;" our knowledge, our tongues, our prophecies, are but fragments of the permanent and eternal.

There are, however, two truths concerning

this impression of the fragmentariness of life which are reassuring. In the first place, the consciousness of incompleteness is essential to a rational view of life as a whole. The real is always a fragment of the ideal; and the greater one's ideal is, the more fragmentary the real must appear. It is the sense, not of attainment and realization, but of the unattained and unrealized, which persuades one to go on. "We attain the better," a great philosopher has said, "because we conceive a Best." Thus the sense of fragmentariness is one aspect of a faith in idealism. There is, in the phrase of one of our own teachers, "a glory of the imperfect."

"'T is not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do."

"I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

The second reassuring truth is this, — that fragmentariness is not only inevitable, but may have its essential place in the completed whole. Life is made not of one piece, but of many pieces. A man makes his life as an artist makes a window. The artist takes an infinite number of fragments of glass and sets them in their places within his design. Taken

by themselves, nothing could be more insignificant than these bits of glass, but when the light shines through them in their setting, each of them is an essential part of the beautiful whole. So the light of God shines through the fragmentariness of life. You set your piecemeal undertaking, your bits of routine, your incidental experiences, on the North side of life, where there is no sunshine, and they look hopelessly dull and colorless; but when you build them into your Southern wall, where the light of the Eternal shines through them, then each fragment finds its place, and that which is in part is done away because that which is perfect is come.

V

THE RELIGION OF A SCHOLAR

Rom. xii. 1.

THE religion of Paul is of special interest to College men because it is the religion of a scholar. He had sat under the best masters, he had been taught the learning of his age, and his intention as a Christian apostle was to give a scholar's interpretation to religious truth, and to teach the religion of an educated man. The people also to whom he wrote were for the most part educated people, able to understand his philosophy, and not unskilled in the metaphysics and theology of the time. Paul wrote, therefore, not as a sentimentalist, but as an educated man, describing the principles of a reasonable faith. But what was it which in his opinion made religion reasonable? It was, as this passage indicates, the application of faith to service. "I beseech you," he says, "that ye present . . . a reasonable service," or — as the Greek more accurately says — a logical offering, a rational sacrifice. Take your reason,

that is to say, your logic, your philosophy, and put them in the line of service, and their application becomes their justification. Scholarship, to be reasonable, must minister to life. A university is not maintained to give men irresponsible enjoyment, but to train men for the rational service of the world. The logical sacrifice of the scholar is the offering of his thought to service. The world asks of scholars two things: a service that is reasonable, and a reason that is serviceable; work made intelligent, and intelligence set to work. The selfish mind, the self-satisfied, self-conceited, indifferent student, is not, according to the teaching of Paul, a scholar. The cynical, flippant, and critical mind is not that of a scholar. The scholar is reverent and humble; he makes himself of no reputation; he takes on the form of a servant; he is in constant relation with thoughts and ideals so much greater than himself that he forgets himself in the desire for a reasonable service. The scholar's life is chastened and humbled through companionship with great truths and great aims.

A few years ago, there lived in Oxford a tutor named Nettleship. He was a modest

teacher of philosophy, much loved by his own pupils, but comparatively unknown to the world, and indifferent to the world's applause. He was of athletic tastes and physical fearlessness. In 1892 he was climbing Mont Blanc with his guides, and perished there in a snowstorm. His last word to the guide was the word of a true scholar. "Forward," he said, and fell dead. On Nettleship's monument in Balliol College Chapel are these words, which any man who wants to be a scholar might well write over his desk and read each day: "He loved great things and thought little of himself. Desiring neither fame nor influence, he won the devotion of men and was a power in their lives; and seeking no disciple, he taught to many the greatness of the world and of man's mind." That was the scholar's reasonable service.

VI

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

Matthew xxv. 15.

ONE of the most striking characteristics of the teaching of Jesus is the fact that the people whom he selects for commendation are almost invariably people at work, and that the pictures in which he describes the Kingdom of God are for the most part pictures of the daily work of the common world. Servants and householders, porters and stewards, ploughmen and sowers, women at their baking and their sweeping, — these are the figures that come and go across the stage of the New Testament. They do not go out of their way to become Christians; they find their discipleship just where they are, in the doing of their daily work.

A great many people are apt to think of religion as a thing set apart, in a special region of experience, to be taken — as we say in a University — as "an extra," not in the regular curriculum of life. Religion seems to them like a rare flower, or a fruit grown

out of season, instead of the bread and water of their daily life. Sometimes a college student excuses himself for not learning his lessons on the ground that he has been engaged in "Christian work," forgetting that the most immediate Christian work in a College is precisely that learning of lessons which had seemed an alternative to the discipleship of Christ. Sometimes a man in the business world proposes to atone for hardness in making money by softness in distributing money, as though a Christian could be divided like a vessel into water-tight compartments, so that if one part should sink, the other part might hold it up. The teaching of Jesus is a constant protest against a divided life, an ethical bi-metallism. The test of Christian discipleship in a man of business is not so much the way he gives his money, as the way he makes his money. The place of religion is not in one's extra hours, but in one's working hours. The sphere of religion is not in a compartment of life, but in the whole of life.

One of the earliest and most interesting evidences of Christian teaching is the papyrus fragment, discovered in 1887 among the rubbish heaps of the Nile, on which are inscribed

seven short sentences, each beginning with the phrase, "Jesus says." Six of these sayings are practically repetitions of phrases already familiar in the Gospels, but the fifth saying is new; and though its meaning has been much debated, it appears to confirm the teaching of Jesus concerning the gospel of work. "Jesus says: Smite the rock and thou shalt find me; cleave the wood and there am I." The quarryman, driving his drill under the hot Eastern sun, finds his Master looking up at him from the task well done; the carpenter, at his bench, fitting the joints of his work true to his pattern, meets the Lord Jesus Christ as though in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth.

"They who tread the path of labor, follow where Christ's feet
have trod,
They who work without complaining, do the holy will of God.
This is the gospel of Labor — ring it, ye bells of the kirk,
The Lord of Love came down from above to live with the men
that work."

VII

THE COMPULSION OF LOVE

Matthew xxii. 37.

"THOU *shalt* love," says Jesus, repeating an ancient saying which was familiar to his hearers. Love, that is to say, has in it an element of compulsion. It is a categorical imperative. There is an obligation to be kind, generous, affectionate. Does not this seem at first to strike a discordant note? Can there be compulsion in affection? Can you prefix the words "Thou shalt" to the great word "Love"? You cannot take a boy and shake him and say: "You *must* love your parents, you *must* kneel down and tell God you love Him." Is there not in one's affections an essential quality of spontaneity, and when one regards them as obligations, does he not rob them of their fragrance and charm?

All this seems plausible enough, until one remembers the teaching of Jesus concerning the place of the will in the formation of character. His primary appeal is not to the reason

or the emotions, but to the will. "Obedience," as Robertson said, is, to Jesus, the "organ of spiritual knowledge." "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." Modern philosophy speaks of the "will to believe;" Jesus would speak of the will to love. Much of the ungenerous lovelessness of life proceeds, not from essential repulsion or irresistible conviction, but from the failure to apply the will to love. A man and wife promise to love each other, but they make no effort of the will toward the maintenance of love, and drift apart, until of a sudden a home is ruined. A man feels sulky and out of spirits as he rises in the morning, and excuses himself for this attitude toward the world as though it were quite impossible to be friendly in the forenoon. Two friends fly into a passion, and it does not occur to them to apply their wills to reconciliation. The very love of God is often obscured from a human soul, not by an eclipse of theology or philosophy, but simply because the soul does not apply its own will to open its own eyes. "Thou *shalt* love," says Jesus. Sympathy, appreciation, magnanimity, are not luxuries, but obligations. You have no right to be sulky,

suspicious, loveless. Apply the will to the affections. You may be called to be unhappy, but you are never called to be unlovely. The first duty of the morning is to begin the day with a heart clean of animosity and reproach. "Create in me a clean heart . . . , and renew a right spirit within me." This, which is the teaching of Jesus, is familiar to many modern minds as the teaching of Robert Louis Stevenson. Pale, haggard, bed-ridden though he was, his religion demanded of him an inextinguishable kindliness. Wake as he might of a morning with the old pain, he would still sing his morning hymn of unfaltering and cheerful love:—

> "If I have faltered, more or less,
> In my great task of happiness,
> If I have moved among my race
> And shown no glorious morning face,
> If beams from happy human eyes
> Have moved me not; if morning skies,
> Books and my food and summer rain
> Knocked on my sullen heart in vain,
> Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
> And *stab* my spirit wide awake."

VIII

THE LOST

Luke xv. 1–7.

A GREAT part of the time and thought of Christian theologians has been devoted to considering the problem of the lost. What is to become of the lost? What is their penalty? How long is their punishment to last? The problem of perdition has been quite as engrossing as the problem of salvation. It is, however, often unnoticed that there are two ways of being lost. A soul may, on the one hand, be lost as a ship is lost, in an irretrievable and absolute disaster. The vessel strikes the reef, the waves sweep over her, the rocks tear open her sides, and the captain cries: "We are lost." Crew, cargo, and vessel go down together. On the other hand, a soul may be lost, not as a ship is lost, but as a sheep is lost; not as a wreck going to the bottom, but as a wanderer missing his way. A man is lost in a snowstorm. He cannot find his path. He flounders on until at last he stops and says: "I am lost!" He is in real and grave

danger; but though he has lost his way, he has not lost his hope. He calls for help, he presses on until at last he sees a light. It is perhaps the door of his own house that opens, and the anxious watchers look out and answer his call, and the lost is found. This is the usage of the word in the New Testament. According to the teaching of Jesus, people are lost, not as ships are lost, but as sheep are lost. They are not wrecked, they have missed their way; and always the shepherd is looking for the sheep, seeking the one that is lost; and the joy with which the wanderer finds his path is met by the joy of the shepherd saying: "I have found my sheep which was lost."

Here, then, we have, not a theological doctrine, but a fact of experience. Each one of us is sometimes a lost soul. We miss the way to truth; we lose our grip on duty; we take the wrong path of desire; we try a short-cut across the plains of life; we are overtaken by the storm of temptation or by the night of fear. At such a time there are two things to remember. The first is that though one has missed the way, the way itself remains, if only one could find it. It is not a pathless uni-

verse. It is not a lost world, but a world in which one has been misled, or has shut his eyes to the road; and the problem of life — often a solemn or tragic problem — is to rediscover the lost path, and to reëstablish one's relation with a Universe which leads to goodness. Secondly, there is this further assurance, — that when one is lost, he is not only looking for his way, but is being looked for; that the shepherd is seeking the sheep as well as the sheep the shepherd; that it is not an empty, silent universe, but resonant with the call of God to those that are lost. This is the essential fact of the religious life, — that the search of the soul for a path is met by the search of God for the soul. Antecedent to our finding the way is His finding of us. "When he was yet a great way off," it is said of the prodigal, "his father saw him . . . and ran" to him. "We love Him because He first loved us," says the Apostle. What we call repentance is but the hearing in the darkness a call to the right way; and as one answers this call, across the darkness comes the Father's voice: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. This my son . . . was lost, and is found."

IX

THE WAVE AND THE SHIP

James 1.

THIS chapter is one of the most extraordinary instances in literature of the use of analogy, figures of speech, and accurate observation. It heaps one illustration on another and leaps from one picture to another, as though all nature and life were created to enrich language and teach lessons. Here are some of its hastily passing pictures, all occurring in twenty-seven verses: the surging sea, the scorching wind, the flower in the grass, the process of birth, the passing shadow, the grafted branch, the glance in the mirror, the untamed tongue. What a gift is here of what Kant called in Goethe "*Augenbegabung*," the ability to use one's eyes! Consider, for instance, the single contrast between the wave and the ship. The writer is supposed to have lived at Jerusalem and perhaps never made a voyage, but his wave is of the real ocean, salty and boisterous, "driven with the wind and tossed." You see the wave heaving

up and the wind catching it and toppling it over in a white-cap and the spray blowing the top of it off with a gust; and then you see the wave sink back into the undistinguishable level, and where there was a wave there is only a hollow in the sea. Such, says James, is the unstable man. You see him for the moment tossed up by the wind of circumstance, and then you look again and where there was a man there is only a cavity. You do not know where to find him; you cannot rest on him. Then a few verses farther on is a picture of the purposes of God: they are unwavering and steady, without "variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning." They are like a ship steadily steered over the waves. Sometimes on a large steamship, with no land in sight, the first sign that the course is changed is the shadow creeping across the deck; it is the "shadow that is cast by turning."

How familiar in the world is this contrast of the wave and the ship: the wave flashing up, conspicuous, boisterous, aggressive, and the ship going her unchanging way with a steady helm! A man begins his life with the utmost promise, and you look back upon his career some day and ask why has that man

accomplished so little in the world. The answer is: "He was unstable, he lacked persistency, steadiness, single-mindedness. There was charm, leap, flash, like a wave tossed by the wind, but his life soon sank into the undistinguishable level of the world." And why, on the other hand, has that quiet man done great things? He knew his course and held his rudder true. There was no shadow cast by turning. The wave showed how the breeze of the day was blowing; the ship showed by its course its destined port. One was blown; the other was steered. The wave may leap up against the ship as if to overwhelm it, but through many a hindrance and obstacle the ship goes, slowly perhaps, yet without variation, on its way, with the unswerving movement of the life of God.

X

THE GATES OF THE CITY

Revelation xxi. 13–27.

THE new Jerusalem, as seen in the vision of the Book of Revelation, was to be a city differing in many respects from cities in the modern world. There was no night there, no curse, no temple. It was to be, not as are many modern cities, for the troubling of the nation, but for its healing. Still more noticeable was its openness, its accessibility, the many-sidedness and hospitality of the new Jerusalem. The city lay four-square; the length and breadth of it were equal, and on each front there were three gates, never shut by day, and in a country where there was no night. From whatever quarter the traveller might arrive there stood before him a gate wide open, and only those who were unclean or abominable or liars were turned back.

It is a picture of the comprehensiveness of the Christian religion. People ask for the high road to the City of God; but in this vision

there are high roads from East as well as West, from North as well as South. Where is the main gate? There are, answers the vision, twelve gates: "The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl." Where, then, shall one enter? He may enter from whatever point he comes. When may he enter? At any hour. Who may not enter? The unclean and the untruthful. The exclusions are not theological but ethical. The archives of the city are not a book of opinions, but a book of life. With this vision the Bible ends, and to this ideal of the city of God Christian faith must turn. Here is the justification of religious tolerance. It proceeds, not from indifference to truth, but from a recognition of the many-sidedness of truth. The truth shines as the moon shines at night, when the track of light seems to come straight to you and to you alone, while you know that the same light radiates toward every other eye, and that while each seems to receive the direct beam, there is enough for all. So the City of God invites the lives of men. By many ways of approach, each legitimate, and each inviting, the paths to the city converge, until at last one enters through the gate into

the city, and the streets converge, and the travellers meet, and there are no separate temples, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof, and whosoever will may take of the water of life freely.

XI

THOU SHALT BE CALLED A ROCK

Matthew xvi. 18.

WITHOUT entering into the ecclesiastical question raised by the words, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," there is something much more personal to notice. Who was this man of whom Jesus said that he was a rock? He was the most unstable and shifting of the disciples, as little like a rock as a man could be. Jesus must have known this; Peter must have known it; and the fishermen with Peter must have known it also. He was quick to act and quick to reject. He was what the modern world calls a "quitter," a man who could not stand the strain of disapproval or suspicion; a man who was more like sand than rock. Yet Jesus takes him just as he is, believes in him when he does not believe in himself, sees his underlying qualities of strength and leadership, and converts him into the rock which he would have him be. It was like the process of nature which tosses

the sand up on the shore and then beats upon it and hardens it until it becomes converted into stone; and we call it, by what seems a contradiction in terms, sandstone. So Jesus takes this unstable character and says to it: "Thou *shalt* be a rock," and by the hard friction and compression of experience Peter becomes that which Jesus saw that he could be.

We are apt to fancy that a Christian life calls for a special type of character; and a man may well say to himself that the calm, patient, Christlike type is inaccessible to him. "I," he says, "am hasty, passionate, undetermined in motive, unfixed in creed, and cannot be made over into the Christian type." Jesus, however, looks upon such a person with a peculiar interest. He has a passion for personality. He delights in discovering qualities which a man has not discovered in himself. "The thoughts of many hearts, it was written, shall be revealed." He takes a man of obvious faults and unsuspected powers, and proceeds to make a Christian out of material which would not think itself applicable to such an end. To one who thinks himself unfit for responsibility the Christian life comes with a

call to service; to one who thinks himself weak it comes with a demand for strength; to one who knows he is stupid it comes with the necessity of wisdom. It calls a man by his own name, "Thou art Peter," and out of rough-hewn stones, unconscious of beauty or of strength, it builds the church of the living God, which is nothing else than a church of living men.

XII

GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME

Psalm xxiii. 6.

IT is interesting to notice the verse with which this familiar psalm comes to its close. It has been a psalm of thanksgiving for the blessings of God, who has led the singer through green pastures, beside still waters, in paths of righteousness, through valleys of shadow; and we should expect the psalm to end in the same strain of gratitude for blessings received, or in some prayer for their continuance. Neither of these is the Psalmist's last petition. He does not ask that blessings shall continue to lead him, but that goodness and mercy shall follow him. They are not to be the guides of his life, but the consequences of his life. He is to go his way as well as he can, through the pastures and valleys of experience, and after him there are to follow more goodness and more mercy. Perhaps he is still thinking of the Oriental shepherd in whose name the psalm began.

"The Lord," he has said, "is my shepherd," and in the East the shepherd goes before, and the sheep hear his voice and follow him. Thus the man who has been blessed of God is to go steadily on, and behind him, like a flock of sheep, will follow the good thoughts and merciful deeds of a better world.

Such is the Psalmist's picture of the blessed life. The man who thus goes his way up and down the hills of experience does not have to look behind him to watch for goodness and mercy; they know his voice and follow him. He meets his obstacles and reverses, and as he looks ahead, life may not appear good or merciful; but what he is concerned about is the consequence of his life, and he goes his way bravely to clear the path for goodness and mercy to follow.

> "The blessings of his quiet life,"

says Whittier,

> "Fell round us like the dew,
> And kind thoughts where his footsteps pressed
> Like fairy blossoms grew."

It was a figure which Jesus himself liked to use. He did not expect to get much mercy from the world: he prayed that after him might follow a world of mercy. "For their

sakes," he said, "I sanctify myself; that they also might be sanctified through the truth." "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Here is the self-respecting, rational end of any modern psalm of praise: "Thou hast led me through many blessings, among green pastures, and by still waters. I do not ask for more of this quiet peace. I ask for strength to go my way bravely along the path of duty, so that after me it shall be easier to do right and to be merciful, and goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

XIII

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

1 *Corinthians* xii. 31.

"COVET earnestly the best gifts," says St. Paul. "And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." He was an educated man addressing educated men, and he would be the last to depreciate the gifts of learning which a scholar should covet. "Desire the best of such gifts," he says. "Give yourself with fidelity to your education. Let the physician seek the gifts of healing, and the politician the gifts of government, and the preacher the gift of tongues. Yet there is something better than these best gifts. Beyond the best gifts lies a more excellent way." And what is this which is better than the best? It is, answers the next chapter, the capacity for sympathy, the gift of human sensibility, the crowning virtue which St. Paul calls love. If this which lies beyond one's special calling be lost, if one's devotion to his own task rob him of social sensitiveness, then, however learned he may become, he is in fact nothing

more than sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. He blows, as we should say, his own trumpet and beats his own big drum. He may know all mysteries and all knowledge, but if he have not found this more excellent way, he is not to be reckoned as an important person; in fact, he should not be called a person, for he is in reality "nothing."

That is the warning of a scholar to scholars. The scholar easily becomes the specialist, and the specialist the pedant, and the pedant a shrunken, truncated, lopsided person, with incapacity to grasp the larger significance even of the subject with which he deals. The scholar, therefore, even for the sake of his scholarship, must widen the circle of his experience. He must know many aspects of life, if he would interpret one aspect of life. "Touch elbows," Dr. Hale once said, "every day with the rank and file." There can be no better counsel for a scholar. He must know something of how the other half lives, and touch that strange and picturesque world which lies on the other side of life, if he would interpret with justice the history or thoughts of men. The redemption of the scholar is not reached by abandoning

his scholarship or depreciating his learning; it is reached by desiring earnestly the best of these gifts and then setting them in the more excellent way of self-forgetting service. We call a university a fountain of truth, but a fountain may be either merely decorative or generously useful. A college which satisfies itself with self-centred culture is a fountain in a park, which thirsty children watch through an iron fence; a college which hears the cry of the time sends the stream of its best gifts along the channel of a more excellent way, for the refreshing of a thirsty world.

XIV

LUKEWARMNESS

Revelation iii. 16.

THIS seems harsh language even for so picturesque a book as the Book of Revelation. Lukewarmness appears to be more despicable than wickedness. The people of Sardis are described as imperfect enough, but they are encouraged "to strengthen the things which remain." The people of Laodicea, being neither hot nor cold, are fit for nothing, and must be spewed out of the mouth. When Dante set his different kinds of sinners in different circles of hell, he was met by the same problem. Where should he place the persons who deserved neither praise nor blame, and were neither hot nor cold? They were not fit for heaven, and the fiends in hell did not want their company. He leaves them, therefore, hanging between the two.

"What folk is this which seems by pain so vanquished?
And he to me: 'This miserable mode
Maintains the melancholy souls of those
Who live withouten infamy or praise.

The heavens expelled them, not to be less fair,
Nor them the nethermost abyss receives;
For glory none the damned would have of them.'"

The reason for this estimate of lukewarmness is clear. These people have forgotten the limits of neutrality, and what they regard as moderation becomes in its effect opposition. There are many times when one has a right to be neither hot with enthusiasm nor cold with contempt. We do not know or care about these things. When, however, we come to the great issues of thought and life, every man has to be counted, and the lukewarm people are always counted with the enemy. That was the reason why, in our civil war, the persons known as Copperheads were so freely condemned. It was a time when those who were not for the North were against it, and the worst enemies were those whose home was in the North, but whose heart was in the South. They thought they could remain neutral, but they were in fact allies of the enemy, attacking the North from the rear. It is the same with each clear issue of duty or each obvious question of religious loyalty. You cannot hold yourself apart from such issues; you will in any event be counted; and the man

who tries not to be counted on either side is always counted on the wrong side. Out from among the persons of the New Testament stand two men who illustrate this truth. Pilate thought it possible to be neither cold nor hot toward the case of Jesus. He washed his hands of the whole matter, and protested that he was guiltless of the blood of this just person. Yet it is plain in the light of history that this lukewarm Pilate was a responsible agent in procuring the death of Jesus Christ. Paul, on the other hand, had made what would have appeared to Pilate a fatal blunder. He persecuted the very Church to which afterwards he gave his loyalty. Yet the same quality which made him a persecutor in the end made him an apostle. Blundering he might be, but lukewarm he could not be, and history has forgotten the grievous mistake of the passionate Paul and remembered his passionate loyalty, while it recalls the lukewarm Pilate only to spew him out of its mouth.

XV

EVOLUTION AND EFFORT

2 Corinthians iv. 9.

IN a remarkable book written a few years ago by Mr. Edmund Kelly, he discusses the fundamental distinction between progress in nature and progress in man. The first proceeds, he says, by adaptation to environment; the second by conquest of environment. One accepts conditions; the other creates conditions. One is a process of evolution; the other is a process of effort. Evolution clothes an animal with a skin adapted to his climate, so that the tawny lion survives in the desert and the shaggy bear in the frozen North. Man, on the other hand, instead of adapting himself to heat or cold, protects himself from both. Instead of developing a skin like that of the lion or bear, he slays the lion and the bear and wears their skins, while his own skin grows soft and white. The hungry animal adapts himself to the tree, so that the giraffe acquires his neck, the bear his claws, and the monkey his

tail; but the hungry man devises a ladder and climbs the tree, or makes an axe and fells the tree to the ground. Everywhere evolution operates toward conformity and effort operates toward control. The distinctive glory of humanity is the capacity to shape hardness into advantage, to transform threatening forces into tractable servants of the will.

Now this is precisely what St. Paul in this passage says about the religious life. He does not commend religion because it adapts one to the world, or rescues one from the battle of life. He invites the Christian to subdue the world, and commands him to put on the whole armor of God. He does not expect escape from persecution or depression; he expects to be "persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." The religious life is to him not a soft and easy condition of escape from the hard ways of experience. It is simply the last step in that great movement of social evolution through which primacy has been given to effort. The phases of religion which are marked by passivity, submission, fatalism, are in a literal sense "natural religions," for they leave man in the same attitude of mind which the animal

holds to nature, of adaptation and acceptance. The Christian religion, on the other hand, is a religion of effort. It teaches the excellence of initiative, creation, power. It deals with man not as a product, but as a producer. It is an instrument of conquest, a means of enduring hardness, a gift of strength. Nature teaches the victory of the strong over the weak; the Christian religion says: "When I am weak, then am I strong." The maxim of the evolutionist is the survival of the fit; the law of the Christian is the revival of the unfit.

XVI

THE ASCENT OF MAN

John xiii. 1–15.

ONE of the most notable books of our generation is the volume of Henry Drummond called "The Ascent of Man." It has been sharply criticised by some men of science, but it remains a most suggestive argument, written by a man who will be long remembered in this University by many grateful hearers. The title is derived from Mr. Darwin's study of the origins of human life, which he called "The Descent of Man," but Drummond undertakes to show that this descent of man has in fact been an ascent; that the history of humanity has been a story of unfolding altruism, from its dim beginnings in the self-multiplying cell, through the dawn of parental self-sacrifice, up to the noblest heroism. As evolution by slow degrees has given to man an erect posture, transformed his forelegs into arms, and lifted his face toward the sky, so evolution has lifted man into moral erectness and upward-looking desires. The strug-

gle for life has been supplemented by the struggle for the life of others.

Have we, however, even in this suggestive discussion, the whole story of moral evolution? Does there not come a point in the ascent of man where the next step is taken, not upward, toward increased erectness, but downward, in acts of pity, condescension, compassion, sympathy, and love? Is not the last transition in the evolution of the spirit to be described as the descent of man? Is not the finest trait in human character the capacity, not to stand erect, but to bow one's self in self-effacing service? I was once talking with a friend about a man who had achieved great distinction, but who had somehow missed the love of his fellowmen, and my friend said: "The trouble with that man is that he cannot bow himself." He had achieved integrity, rectitude, self-respect, but he had not attained that final grace of character which made him able to stoop and serve. Here is precisely the difference which may be observed between the conventional morality of the world and the Christian character. The ideal of the first is erectness, the ideal of the second is service. The first develops the capacity of man

to ascend, the second his capacity to descend. According to the Apostles' Creed, the first act of Jesus Christ after his death was to descend to the condemned spirits and serve them. Before he ascended into heaven he descended into hell. How beautifully this aspect of the Christian character is touched in the story of the last day of Jesus! Here was his last opportunity to demonstrate his Messiahship. He knew, it is written, that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God and went to God. What, then, is the crowning evidence of this right to command? How shall he for the last time demonstrate his spiritual leadership? He rises from supper and bows himself to wash the disciples' feet, saying to them: "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." As the Christian Apostle later says: "He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." Here is the supreme test of spiritual leadership, — to be conscious of great gifts and make them the instrument of humble tasks. To rise from the table of abundance and stoop to works of love, to bow one's self from erectness in order to

serve, — that is the last step in the evolution of character. It brings one to what the New Testament calls the grace of Jesus Christ, the love which bows to the unrequired duty. The ascent of man, the animal, is supplemented by the descent of man, the Christian.

XVII

SALT AND LIGHT

Matthew v. 13, 14.

THE sayings, "Ye are the salt of the earth," "Ye are the light of the world," seem at their first reading to touch the note of self-satisfaction and self-display. People, we say, are the salt of the earth, and we think of the most respectable, unimpeachable, and excellent of our neighbors. People, we say again, are the light of their country or their age, and we think of the most brilliant, cultivated, and illuminated persons, the shining lights of our acquaintance or the stars of their profession. This kind of showy and conspicuous person, however, would be a strange type for Jesus to praise just after he had said: "Blessed are the meek, the merciful, the persecuted." His own life was as far as possible from acceptance or general esteem. He was despised and rejected. His light was soon put out. His teaching was consistently that of self-effacement and service. And when one thinks of

it, this is precisely the teaching of the salt and the light. Salt does its work, not by exhibiting itself, but by losing itself. Its service lies in its solubility. It is lost, but it lives in flavor. If it remains distinguishable, it remains harsh, saline, unwelcome. The place of the salt is found, not in self-assertion but in self-surrender. Light also does its work by dispersion. The candle burns, but it burns itself up. It illuminates by self-surrender. You do not look at the sun; you look at the things which the sun illuminates, and walk in the reflected light. A man goes swinging a lantern down a dark road and you see the light, but not the man. He is in the shadow, but you follow the light. That is precisely what Jesus desired for the Christian character, — not self-display but self-effacement, not the doing of great things but the doing of small things greatly, the permeation of the mass of life as with the taste of salt, the penetration of a dark world as by a generous flame.

I was once travelling in an Oriental country, where life was squalid, women despised, and houses built of mud; and of a sudden I came upon a village where all seemed changed. The houses had gardens before them and

curtains in their windows; the children did not beg of the passer-by, but called out a friendly greeting. What had happened? I was fifty miles from a Christian mission-station, and this mission had been there for precisely fifty years. Slowly and patiently the influence had radiated at the rate of a mile a year, so that one could now for a space of fifty miles across that barren land perceive the salt of the Christian spirit, and could see the light of the Christian life shining as from a light-house fifty miles away. That was the work to which Jesus summoned the world, — not an ostentatious or revolutionary or dramatic work, but the work of the salt and of the light. The saying of Jesus is not for the self-satisfied or conspicuous, but for the discouraged and obscure. A man says to himself: "I cannot be a leader, a hero, or a scholar, but I can at least do the work of the salt and keep the life that is near to me from spoiling; I can at least do the work of the light so that the way of life shall not be wholly dark." Then, as he gives himself to this self-effacing service, he hears the great word: "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," and answers gladly: "So then death worketh in us, but life in you."

XVIII

ADORATION AND INSPIRATION

Ezekiel ii. 1.

THIS passage describes in picturesque language the two attitudes of mind which occur in the experience of religion. The first is the attitude of adoration; the second is the attitude of inspiration. First a man bows in worship and falls on his face before the glory of the Lord; then God says: "Stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee." First there is prostration, receptivity, prayer; then there is expectancy, alertness, obedience. First the eyes are closed before the splendor of God; then the eyes are opened to meet God's command. First one bows as a worshipper; then one stands as a soldier.

It is a beautiful picture of the complete religious life. Many people fancy that religious duty is fulfilled in the bowing of the head and the saying of prayers. They go to church and participate in worship, and return to their lives with an impression that their religion is

disposed of, as Daniel Webster is reported to have signed a business note and said, "Thank Heaven, that money is paid." The prophet does not depreciate these forms of worship. They are an essential part of religious expression. If he had not bowed before the vision of God, he would not have heard the later message, "Stand upon thy feet." Many people fancy, on the other hand, that religion is completely expressed in conduct, fidelity, obedience. "*Laborare est orare*," they say. "Why waste time in worship when there is so much work waiting to be done?" Here also the prophet's teaching recognizes truth. If he had not stood upon his feet, the vision would have been in vain. But in this ancient picture the complete disclosure of God to man is made only when adoration prepares for inspiration and worship passes over into obedience. Revelation needs readiness. Duties are illuminated by dreams. Work is transfigured by worship. A young man enters the chapel of a morning, consciously ignorant, unstable, and weak, and bows himself in quiet prayer before the will of God. Then it is that God says to him: "Stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee," and the man

rises from his prayer and marches through the open door to the work of the world, like a soldier who has received his orders for the day.

XIX

THE TRANSMISSION OF DISCIPLESHIP

John i. 41.

NOTICE the way in which the first company of disciples was recruited. They did not all gather in answer to the call of Jesus. They called each other. Jesus meets Andrew, and then Andrew "findeth his own brother Simon." Jesus again meets Philip, and "Philip findeth Nathanael." It is a contagious message. It is a transmitted discipleship. The first desire of the new life is not to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear more of His teaching, but to go away and help some one else.

Many people are inclined to regard their religion as a blessing to find and keep. They "get religion;" they "find Christ;" their doubts are satisfied, their lives are at peace, and then religion seems to have done its work for them. But in fact, this kind of religion has not as yet taken the first step into the method of Christianity. The first mark of Christian discipleship is the desire to com-

municate it. To take your incomplete conviction, half-established loyalty, and wavering ideals, and set them in the way of service, — that is not only the method of spreading the Christian religion, but it is also the way to reinforce and confirm your own faith. When John Wesley went as a missionary to Georgia, he went, as he writes, "to save his own soul;" but two years later he returned to England a disappointed man, having saved neither his own soul nor those of the colonists and Indians. "I who went to America to convert others," he says, "was never myself converted." Then, with a new accession of self-forgetfulness, he turned from his own salvation to the service of others. The words spoken of his Master came home to him: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." He was no longer Wesley the ritualist, but Wesley the missionary. "He first findeth his own brother Simon," and soon his own life acquired confidence and peace. "His soul was saved," says his biographer, "because he had found his work."

The same story may be told of many a modern life which is concerned with the movement of philanthropy and social service,

now so conspicuous. Some people imagine that this sense of social responsibility, however excellent it may be, is quite detached from religion, and indeed a kind of competitor with religion. Is not Christianity, they ask, a matter of worship, creeds, prayers; and when the attention of the time is devoted to charity-work, social settlements, and industrial reforms, what is to become of religion? The fact is, however, that this is not a question of alternatives but of sequence. These enterprises of fraternal service are neither substitutes for religion nor the whole of religion, but it is not impossible that they are the first signs of an approaching renaissance of religion, such as the world has not seen since the coming of Christ. When a modern Andrew or Peter turns from his own contemplative acceptance of religion and thinks first of all of Simon and Nathanael; when a college like ours and an age like ours are stirred in an unprecedented degree by the sense of fraternal responsibility for the weak, the ignorant, and the sinning; then, though many a man may think himself far from the religious life, and many a teacher of religion may regret the decadence of the forms of religion, it may

be that the transmission of discipleship will become the beginning of a stable faith, and that in religion, as in other things, it will prove true that he who loses his life alone shall save it.

XX

THE REFINER

Malachi iii. 3.

THE refining of metals by modern scientific methods is a very different process from the primitive ways which the prophet Malachi knew; but in the unchanging East you may still see men refining gold and silver just as they did in Old Testament times. You walk through the bazaars of Damascus or Cairo and come on a man sitting cross-legged in his little booth, shaping his gold and silver with no agent but a charcoal fire, kept aflame by a bellows which he works with his foot. "He shall sit," says the prophet, "as a refiner and purifier of silver," and, as the New Testament adds, "The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." And how does the refiner know when his work is done? He knows it, so they say in the East, by looking down into the molten mass, and seeing the image of his own face reflected from the fire as from a mirror. When the undistorted image of the refiner looks back

at him out of the flame, it tells him that his work of purifying is done.

Is not that a picture of the way in which God refines many a soul? One's life is a confused mass of precious and worthless stuff, of gold and dross. It is thrown into the furnace of experience, and the fire of trouble or work or trial tests it. Sometimes the soul cries out against this painful process, but there is no gentle way of refining precious metal. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: because it shall be revealed by fire." The process which scourges is the process which purifies. "I have refined thee," says another prophet, " . . . in the furnace of affliction." And when is this refining process at last complete? It is when the Master, looking down upon the life thus tested, finds his own image formed within the heart. We speak of a face as full of refinement, and some such faces, no doubt, were born with this look of graciousness and peace. The refined life is, as a rule, however, the product of fire. It is purged as gold and silver is purged, by the refiner's flame. You have seen some persons who began their lives without beauty, and who acquired in later years a certain charm of face.

What was it that made them grow beautiful as they grew older? It was their refinement by fire. The pure metal had been discovered by the very heat which seemed to consume it, and when the Refiner looked down upon the life He had been shaping, He was met by a new refinement in its face. Pure metal responds to this searching test, and many a life which had thought its experience too fiery to bear looks up at last and says, "I am satisfied, for I awake in Thy likeness." Then the Refiner knows that His work is done.

XXI

CHILDISHNESS AND CHILDLIKENESS

Matthew xviii. 3.

"EXCEPT ye become as little children," says Jesus, "ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." But can we fairly admit that the saying is altogether just? Is it quite certain that little children are better than grown people? Is it better to be a good baby than to be a good man? Does not the Apostle Paul strike a healthier note in saying: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things"? Is it not childish to idealize children? Would it not have been more reasonable if Jesus had set among his disciples some clear-eyed young man or fair young woman and said: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven"?

The fact is, however, that Jesus is dealing with a much more subtle truth than that of the intrinsic worth of childhood. He is speaking, not of a reversion to childishness, but of the evolution of childlikeness. A child is born

into its little world of domestic dependence, unreflecting faith, and unhesitating love. It faces life without foreboding, and approaches other people with instinctive confidence and trust. A timid, discouraged, or unloving child is an unhealthy or morbid child. The child is naturally blessed with simplicity, unaffectedness, spontaneity, courage, and faith. Life goes on, however, and this instinctive dependence and unreasoning faith must be outgrown. The shades of the prison-house begin to close about the growing boy; the vision splendid fades into the light of common day. The safeguards of the home are supplanted by the risks of the world. Simplicity is lost in worldly wisdom, and childish trust finds itself defeated or deceived. What, then, is the problem of life? It is not, of course, the impossible problem of shrinking up into babyhood, or refusing to look at the world with the eyes of a man. It is the much more difficult problem of reproducing, under the conditions of maturity, the qualities which made childhood winsome and beautiful. To be a man or woman, and to be as if you had not grown up, — that is childishness; but to regain as man or woman the simplicity and responsiveness of

a child, to supplant the child's instinctive faith by the man's rational faith, and the child's emotional love by the man's rational love, — that is not childishness but childlikeness, and that is the mark of the best human lives. The greatest of scholars have been at the same time men of peculiar simplicity and childlikeness. They had nothing to disguise or to pretend. They knew how little they knew, and thought of themselves, as Newton is reported to have said, as children gathering shells on the beach of the unknown. A working-man was once given a copy of Plato's dialogues, and after reading them said: "How simple they are! A child could understand them." It is the same with the growth of character. The evolution of conduct is a cycle from simplicity to simplicity. Life is like a tower with a spiral staircase, a door at the foot, and a window at the top. You enter at the door of childhood and begin the ascent of life, and it is sometimes dark about you, so that you have to grope your way. At last you come to the top and look out from the window of maturity, and to your surprise it is the same view which you saw as you entered childhood's door. The winding stair has brought you

round to the same outlook, but the horizon is far wider than you could see below. You have not descended into childishness; you have ascended into childlikeness. You have been converted; that is to say, you have turned round, as you ascended the spiral stair, and as you look out over the broader view, close at your feet are the fearlessness, simplicity, and love of the little child.

XXII

CROOKEDNESS AND WICKEDNESS

Psalm CXXV. 5.

ACCORDING to this verse, crookedness is not the same as wickedness, but it comes to the same end. "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity." It is curious to notice how the common forms of our modern speech recognize this same relation of crookedness to wickedness. We speak, for example, of crookedness in business, by which we mean not downright fraud, but slippery dealings whose next step will be law-breaking. Crookedness in business is wickedness within the law. In the same way the language of crime speaks of a man as a "crook." He is not a criminal, but he abets crime in others or receives goods which others have stolen. And on the other hand, we speak of a straightforward man or of a "straight" man, as one in whom there is no tortuousness or duplicity; and the slang of the time, instead of saying,

"That is true," says, "That is straight." Here is an unconscious acceptance of the distinction which runs through the Biblical teaching. Life in the Bible is for the most part defined, not by its achievement but by its direction; it is a road, a way, where the problem is to keep on the straight path. "Make Thy way straight before my face," "Thou wilt shew me the path of life," says the Psalmist; "Make straight paths for your feet." "Make His paths straight," it is said of the Messiah. "I am the way," says Jesus. Life is tested by the way it takes and the straightness with which it walks. And on the other hand, the beginnings of evil are not so much in misdeeds as in misdirection or in lack of direction. A generation which does not turn to truth is a "crooked generation." A life that is without aim walks like a drunkard, crookedly. That is the essence of what we call dissipation. The scattering of intention, the wandering of desire, the divided life, brings the crooked at last to be a worker of iniquity. "No man," says the Gospel, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Why is this? Because one cannot look back and plough straight. He makes

a crooked furrow, and as the harvest grows, it proves him a careless farmer.

The same teaching is suggestively touched in a passage of St. Paul's, where the earlier translation speaks of the simplicity which is in Christ, but where the Greek reads, "The undeviating, or undefiled, straightness which is toward Christ." What makes a man straight is not the conclusion he has reached, but the way he is going. He may not be in Christ, but if he is walking toward Christ, he is saved from crookedness and given simplicity. He may go stumblingly, but he knows his road. As he follows the way, it opens into the truth, and as he reaches the truth, it expands into the life.

XXIII

THE TROLLEY

Ephesians i. 19.

IF you should examine a concordance of the New Testament, you would be struck by the repeated use, both in the Gospels and the Epistles, of the word Power. "The multitudes glorified God," says Matthew, "who had given such power unto men." "The kingdom of God," says Mark, comes "with power." "His word was with power," says Luke. "Thou hast given him power," says John. "The exceeding greatness of his power," says Paul in this Epistle. The New Testament, that is to say, is a text-book of dynamics. It describes how men get power, and how power may be applied. The Christian Church is a power-house for the distribution of force to move the lives of men. But what is it that gives any machine its power? The power is not inherent in the machine. The machine is the instrument, or the transmitter, of power. It accomplishes its work because it is geared in with an un-

failing dynamic. Precisely this is the method of spiritual power. A man does not become powerful, efficient, or convincing by trying to exert this force. He does not get an influence by wanting to have it, or by scheming to have it. He does not lead people by running ahead of them, any more than a little boy is a leader because he marches in front of the band. A man gets power as he keeps in contact with a source of power. The dynamic of truth or duty or faith or love touches him and communicates power. Life is like the trolley-car that moves when it keeps its trolley on the wire and stops when it loses contact with the power, which is generated many miles away.

This is the reason why one comes here from day to day to worship. What he wants is power, efficiency, force; and to have this stored-up power he must keep connection with the Source of power. The business and routine of life throws us out of gear, the trolley is off its wire, and we come to a dead stop, because, in spite of the best of equipment for life, we have lost contact with the Power of life. Then we return to a conscious relationship with the Eternal, and it is as if

the machinery of life started up again and the current were reëstablished. The subtle mystery of the life of God flows through the mechanism of the life of man; as the subtle electric fluid flows through the city's streets, and we go on our way again, knowing, as this Epistle says, "What is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward, according to the working of His mighty power."

XXIV

VISIONS AND DREAMS

Acts ii. 17.

THIS is a part of the first Christian sermon. Peter is setting forth the signs of a Christian experience, and he takes for his text a passage from the prophet Joel, which all his hearers know by heart: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." How natural it would be for some modern man to answer: "Yes, that is precisely what deters me from the religious life. It is a thing of visions and of dreams. What has an educated man to do with these? The world is not made of visions, but of facts. A university is no place for mystics and sentimentalists; it is a place for the scientific observation of verifiable truth. My God is the God of things as they are." All this seems plausible enough, yet one of the profoundest facts of experience is this: that one's career is in the main determined, not so much by things as they are,

but by one's vision of things as they ought to be; not by one's possessions, but by one's dreams. "Man," an English philosopher has said, "is an ideal-forming animal." What distinguishes a man from a brute is precisely this possession of the faculty of vision.

Nowhere is the significance of visions and of dreams more impressive than in a university. Externally it may seem to be a place of collections and museums, of books and facts, but in reality it exists for nothing else than the perpetuation of idealism. In a world of commercialism and self-seeking, the higher education is set to foster reverence, imagination, insight, spiritual liberty. When a young man in college sees the vision of what he wants to be or do, or when an old man dreams his dream of usefulness or service, these ideals are not to be lightly dismissed as intrusive or impracticable. They are in fact the thoughts which redeem life from commonplace and prose, and give it significance and power. One may not achieve what he conceives, but that which he does achieve comes of obedience to his vision. When a man wishes to leap a chasm, he looks, not into the chasm, but beyond it, and then, though he

may not reach the point to which he looks, he may clear the chasm. It is the same with life. The effectiveness of each day's work comes of the ideal beyond it to which one looks. Each quiet resolution, each silent prayer for self-control, or purity, or patience, has its place in the routine or detail of the day's task. The sign of the Spirit of God to-day, as in the days of Peter or of Joel, is when young men, looking forward into life, see their visions, and old men, looking back on life, dream their dreams.

XXV

THE SHALLOWS AND THE DEEPS

Luke v. 4.

ONE of the most striking aspects of the teaching of Jesus is his use of the simplest incident to teach the greatest lessons, and his conversion of each fact of nature or life into a parable of his work. Here, for example, he comes upon these fishermen who had already pledged themselves to be his disciples, and finds them washing their empty nets upon the beach and complaining that they had brought no fish to land. So it is, Jesus seems to say to himself, with their half-hearted discipleship. They had put out a little way into that great adventure, but had soon retreated to the shore with empty nets and empty hearts. Then Jesus lifts his eyes to the great lake which spreads before them in breadth and mystery, and it becomes to him the picture of the mission to which he had called these timid fishers. "Put out more boldly," he says to them, "into deeper waters, and make a braver venture of your faith.

How can you fill your nets when you fish in the shallows? Why dabble in the shoals of life when you are called to the great sea? Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. You have been catching minnows when I have called you to catch men."

"Launch out into the deep." It is the call of Jesus to many a modern life as it sits upon the beach of the world and washes its empty nets. Many a man is ineffective because he does not let down his nets as deep as they were meant to go. If, as he looks back on life, he were to name his chief regret, it would be, not so much his wickedness as his shallowness; the failure to use life at its best, the small use of the large opportunity, the dabbling in the shoals of experience instead of sailing into its deeps. He has sat on the shore of experience, timid, self-distrustful, indolent, fancying himself not fit to go far from land, and so all his days he has lived like a child playing in the sand, while men no better than he have done their business in great waters. To such a life comes this call of Jesus. This is not what you were made for. This is not the way to catch men. One must

take chances, if he would use life for all it is worth. It is often as easy to do a great thing as to do a small one. Launch out into the deep. Steer for your ideal; let down your nets where they were meant to go; and I do not say that you shall escape all disaster or disappointment, or shall always find your nets unbroken and full, but I do say that you shall at least be saved from the fate of the dabbler and smatterer, the regret of the dilettante and idler, and shall have at least the joy that comes of the large use of life, as when one thrusts out from a little creek and sails forth into the breadth and refreshing of the sea.

XXVI

SANCTIFICATION FOR OTHERS' SAKES

John xvii. 19.

WHEN a young man comes from his home or school to a university, one of the most curious impressions he is apt to bring with him is the presupposition that a place of the higher education is somehow a place of the lower temptations. Tender parents and anxious teachers foster this delusion. They warn young people about the perils of college life, until some young men are inclined to feel that they have not thoroughly entered into this new experience until they have entered into its follies or sins. The first thing to say of this impression of college life is that it is grossly mistaken. The fact is that such a community is peculiarly sheltered from many of the temptations of the world. The solicitations to evil cannot be compared with those which beset a young man who enters business life in a great city. There are more wholesome influences here, more rational piety, more bodily chastity, a

cleaner standard of thinking, than one will probably meet anywhere else in his whole life. When one of our teachers was asked to speak on the temptations of college life, he began by enumerating its temptations to excellence.

But suppose, on the other hand, that things are not going right with us here; suppose one sees other men tempted to evil, or finds himself tempted; what is his duty? Is he here to be ministered unto or to minister, to save himself or to help to save us all? Is one to be merely good, or is he to be good for something? The Italian patriot, Mazzini, once said, "When I see any one called good, I ask: 'Who then has he saved?'" Goodness, as taught by Jesus Christ, is a redemptive, creative, responsible goodness. "For their sakes, he says, "I sanctify myself." The sanctification even of Jesus Christ was not for his own sake, but for effectiveness and responsibility. The real temptation of academic life is not flagrant sin, but indifference, neutrality, irresponsibility, a self-defensive morality. A parent writes to his son, "You are going into a dangerous place; be on your guard; keep yourself free from its temptations; be a good

boy." That is precisely the youth who is in danger here. He conceives himself to be in peril, and he becomes self-considering, introspective, and easily misled. What is it that a loving parent ought to write to his son? He should say: "My dear boy, you are going into a world of intense activity and great diversity, with all sorts of people in it, but with a strong central movement toward goodness. Get into the middle of the stream. Take your part in it, share the joy and glow and happiness of it. Make yourself a factor for wholesome living. Remember the great words of Jesus: 'For their sakes I sanctify myself,' and sanctify yourself not for your own sake but for others. You cannot save your own soul alone; you save it only by making it of use. The only safe goodness is a serviceable goodness. Think each day, not of what the world can do for you, but of what you can do for the world, and be sure that the best which can ever be said of any man is that which was said of Jesus Christ, 'He saved others, himself he cannot save.'"

XXVII

THE CREATION OF OPPORTUNITY

1 *Samuel* xvii. 50.

THE first thing that strikes one in the familiar story of David and Goliath is the fact that young David creates his own opportunity. He uses the weapon which is familiar to his hand, and what other men would have thrown away as useless in battle becomes sufficient for his need. The smooth stones serve his purpose. He sees his own gifts and makes the most of what he has. A great many people are ready to fight if only they had Saul's armor instead of their own sling. What they ask of life is another man's opportunity. Thousands of men in the business world thus waste their years in waiting for a large place instead of utilizing the one they have, and creating their place with their own weapons. It is the same with the experience of life. Every man feels himself ill-equipped. He looks at the task to be done and seems to be meeting a giant with a sling. Young David, however, creates his

own opportunity. His friends want to put Saul's armor on him, but he utilizes the weapon he has learned to use, and out of a situation which seemed certain to fail, creates victory. Here is the secret of efficiency,—the discerning of a chance where others would despair, the utilizing of weapons which others would throw away. One of our own poets has told the story in the parable of the king's son:—

"Then I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream,
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain,
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and sword
Clashed upon sword and shield. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge
And thought, 'Had I a sword of keener steel,
That blue blade that the king's son bears — but this
Blunt thing!' He snapt and flung it from his hand,
And cowering crept away and left the field.
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemies down
And saved a great cause that heroic day."

XXVIII

COMMANDING THE MORNING

Job xxxviii. 12–14.

THE Book of Job is one of the world's great epics, where the whole problem of human sin and sorrow and the mystery of the ways of God is unfolded in the most dramatic form. The great scheme, however, often overshadows the extraordinary touches of poetic insight which appear in the least details. Consider, for instance, this passing allusion to the work of the morning. "Hast thou," the poem says, "commanded the morning . . . and caused the dayspring to know his place?" Have you, that is to say, taken possession of the new day and become its master, so that the morning shall be a servant who is at your command? And what is to give one the command of the morning? What ought the dayspring to do, if it knows its place? First, answers the poet, the morning is to take hold of the ends of the earth and shake the wicked out of it. It is like a man who takes his coat out into the open air and

shakes it by its ends so that the dust is blown away. So God lays hold of the world in the morning and shakes away the sleep and torpor of the night, and the world begins its day afresh. Secondly, the same passage goes on, the morning is like a seal which stamps the wax. The night has passed without making a distinct impression; it has been fluid, formless, molten. Then the morning comes, and one stamps the fluid wax of the day with a definite seal.

The morning is the time to shake ourselves like a garment, free from the dust and dirt that have clung to us and the sin which has easily beset us. The morning is the time to stamp the day with a specific intention and to determine what mark it shall bear. Definiteness supplants the undefined hours of the night. One puts his seal upon his purpose and fixes it with his act. The morning first shakes one, and then determines one for the day. When this is done, in thought or prayer, and a man with new alertness and new precision faces his work, then he commands the morning. He has made the dayspring to know its place and is the master of his day.

XXIX

COVETOUSNESS

Luke xii. 14.

ONE of the least observed but most striking traits of the character of Jesus Christ is his capacity for irony. Hostile questioners plan to entangle him in some knotty question, and he cuts that knot with so keen a reply that the hearer is left defenseless and silent. Take, for instance, this question about inheritance. It is evident that the inquirer hopes to ensnare Jesus in a discussion on the law of estates, and to catch him in some offence against the law; and the group of listeners crowd nearer to observe how the discussion will proceed. Jesus, however, is not to be involved in such a controversy. "Man," he says, "who made me a judge, or a divider over you?" I am not, that is to say, a political economist or a demagogue. You know the law of inheritance as well as I. Having said this, however, he goes farther. Through the question he looks into the heart of the questioner, and through

the faces of the listeners he discerns their motives and desires. What was exciting their interest was in reality not a question of the law of inheritance, but their own greed of gain. They were hoping to get from Jesus some endorsement of their schemes of social revolution. They spoke of justice, but they were thinking of self-interest. What seemed to be a question of law was the cover of a question of morals. Jesus, therefore, having declined to deal with the economic question, unmasks the moral question, and answers, not the problem as it is presented, but the deeper problem which their greedy looks expressed. With a sweeping glance round the crowd of faces he says unto them all, "Beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth;" and then he goes on to tell the stories of the rich man and his barns, and of the lilies of the field.

With something of the same subtle irony Jesus, I think, might meet some of the social programmes and panaceas which are now so freely offered in the name of justice or brotherhood or social peace. Never were there so many schemes proposed for making a per-

fect world. "Speak to my brother," says the modern agitator, "that he divide the inheritance with me;" and with these programmes of economic revolution men come to the teaching of Jesus for confirmation. To such questioners Jesus, first of all, answers: "Man, who made me a judge, or a divider?" It is quite in vain to attempt the conversion of the Gospel into an economic document, or to reduce its message to that of a revolutionary tract. Behind the economic problem, however, lies, as before, a question with which Jesus has a right to deal. What is it that prompts this creed of revolution? Is it philanthropy, or is it envy? What do men expect to get from their new social formula? Is it justice for the workers, or is it the hope of living without work? What are the motives of these crusades, — love or hate, the spirit of service or the hope of gain? At this point the social schemes of each age are confronted by the judgment of Jesus Christ. Scrutinize them, he says, not only for their economic efficiency, but also for their moral motive. Beware, in such enterprises, of covetousness. Life consisteth not in the abundance of possessions. You may eat, drink, and be merry

and yet be a fool. You may be very prosperous and yet very poor. Many a good social scheme has been wrecked by a covetous leader. Social wisdom begins, not in a divided product, but in an undivided heart.

XXX

FORGETTING THE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND

Philippians iii. 13.

PAUL was a man who had to bear about with him throughout his life the bitter memory of a misdirected past. He had become an apostle, the chief agent in the propagation of the Christian religion, but he could not escape the memory of days when he had done everything to thwart the religion which he now confessed. He had persecuted the Church and stood by while its first martyr was stoned to death. As he thought of these things, they paralyzed his apostleship. Who was he that he should be a leader? "I am not worthy to be called an apostle." He was, however, sane enough to see that though this past could not be effaced, it could be atoned for. A habit of mind, he concluded, must be cultivated which lets the dead past bury its dead, drops one's paralyzing mistakes just where they are, and leaves one free to press forward to the high calling which lies before.

That is a wholesome word with which to begin one's day. There are, of course, many memories of the past which it would be suicide to forget; strengthening, consoling, sobering, and uplifting associations which give courage and self-control to each day's life. Along with these precious memories, however, there are the mistakes and regrets and hostilities of the past which are now simply irremediable, and for which the only atonement lies in the future. The repining, self-reproaching, backward look toward such things is the paralysis of energy. It is, as Paul says, like the conduct of the apprehensive runner, who glances over his shoulder lest the competitor should be gaining, and by that very glance slackens his own gait. Life, says the Apostle, is just such a race, and many a defeat comes of the backward look. The race lies before. The things which are behind are like pursuers, not to hold us back, but to make us run. The prize of the high calling is not for the lingerer or the backward-looking, or the "quitter," but for the man who, in spite of many faults and follies, has acquired discipline and self-control fit for the strain of life. Faithful training has

made many a weak man strong and many a dark horse win. The test of life comes when the things that are behind close up, and the plucky runner, with no turn of his head, opens the gap and stretches forward to the things that are before.

XXXI

FERVOR AND FEVER

Exodus iii. 2.

THE bush burned . . . and the bush was not consumed;"—that was the sign which proved to Moses that the Spirit of God was near. There was fire but not destruction. There was combustion but not consumption. God burned in the bush, but God did not burn up the bush. It is a symbol also in human life of the intimate presence of the Spirit of God. Some lives do not burn at all. They are like damp wood or separate logs, cold, passionless, unilluminated, unignitable. They run no risk of being consumed, for there is nothing in them to catch fire. They may be very learned, but their learning is not kindled into life. They are suspicious of emotion and cultivate repose. When they see a life all aflame with enthusiasm or indignation, they find it not a divine but a somewhat vulgar spectacle. To stir such men to generous activity, you have to light a fire under them. On the other hand is the life that

burns and burns itself up. It is spasmodic, sentimental, hysterical, consumed like a candle by its own flame. It tries to express fervor and it really expresses fever. Its religion is intermittent, easily inflammable and easily extinguished. Such a life rushes to its problems as a fire-engine hurries to a false alarm. It was a brisk blaze, but it was only a heap of brush. The fire was out before the engine arrived; the bush burned and the bush was consumed.

Finally, between the sentimentalist and the rationalist is the life in which feeling and reason meet. Its religion is not an intermittent fever but a steady flame. You do not have to light a fire under it because there is a flame within. This is the life which can be devout and yet be sensible; passionate for righteousness but consistent and determined; capable of enthusiasm and not incapable of discrimination. It is one thing for a group of boys to light a heap of rubbish on the beach and perplex a sailor with its sudden glare. It is quite another thing to set on the coast a fixed light, which may be trusted from year to year, and which shows the sailor his way through the dark to the safety of his harbor.

"I will turn aside," says the captain, "and see this great sight;" and he stands in toward the land, until he makes the light which burns and is not consumed.

XXXII

THE RAINBOW ROUND THE THRONE

Revelation iv. 3.

THIS is one of the striking figures of speech in which the Book of Revelation abounds. The rainbow is a sign of a storm, but it is the sign of a storm that is past. Round about the throne of God, says this writer, is set this sign,—the symbol, not of continuous sunshine for the saints, but of darkness and storm, and then of the light shining out again in the bow of promise. The same story of experience is told in different language in other passages of this mystical book. Who is he that is God's favored son? It is he, answers the Book of Revelation, that overcometh; not he who has met no vicissitudes or storms, but he who has overcome them. And who again are these that are arrayed in white robes? "These are they which came out of great tribulation; . . . therefore are they before the throne of God." In short, the teaching of the Book faces the fact that life is inevitably stormy and over-

clouded, but promises that after the storm comes the sunshine and out of the clouds shines the rainbow.

A great many people try to make life all fair weather. They are like young men who begin their college course by looking for "soft electives." They want to enroll in the easiest courses and have no further trouble. But in the curriculum of life there is not a single "soft course." Some careers may look easy when we read of them in the elective pamphlet of life, but the man who chooses his way on such terms is courting disaster and despair. The most obvious fact written on experience is this, — that it was meant to be hard. Trouble, disaster, humiliation, doubt, fear, are not to be avoided but to be overcome. This is not a world of continuous sunshine, and a man is insane who expects no rainy days. What, then, is the problem of life? It is, as this passage says, to expect storms and to bear them; to make the torrent of yesterday's rain, not the devastator but the fertilizer of one's field; to walk through great tribulation and keep one's robes white, to watch the clouds clear away and the world become more beautiful for the baptism of the

storm. That is the problem of life,— not an escape from trouble, but an overcoming of trouble; not a cloudless sky, but an unclouded heart. And when one has thus met the weather of life and walked his way steadily through it, then the very clouds under which he has been called to pass may change before him into a rainbow, as though the throne of God were not far away.

XXXIII

THE EXPEDIENCY OF CHRIST'S DEPARTURE

John xvi. 7.

HOW bewildering it must have been to the disciples of Jesus, when they seemed most dependent on him and when his departure seemed to shatter all their hopes, to have him say to them: "It is expedient for you that I go away." Yet how plain it now is that his departure, instead of defeating their hopes, fulfilled them. While he was with them, they did not half understand his teaching. Thrown on themselves, they came to know him better. His message needed perspective and distance. "If I go not away," he said, with profound discernment, "the Comforter will not come unto you." Memory was more convincing to them than companionship. When they walked with him in the way, their eyes were holden.

It is a very common experience to have life thus guided and illuminated by that which goes away. One of the most subtle

characteristics of the mind is its helpless struggle with a truth, until the truth for the moment goes away and in some more relaxed and less strenuous mood its meaning becomes clear. One of the most familiar facts of memory is the strain to recall a name or an incident, until one dismisses it from the mind and it returns of its own accord. It is the same with the course of education. A time arrives when the props of education should be withdrawn and the teacher say to the youth: "It is expedient for you that I go away and that the spirit of truth may come unto you." It is the same with many of the deeper experiences of life. Sometimes a dearly loved parent or friend, on whom it seemed absolutely necessary to lean for happiness and strength, goes away into the mystery of death, and that very departure makes the influence on one's own life more direct and ennobling than before. Sometimes one's purpose in life seems fixed and final, and by some inevitable incident the fulfilment of that purpose becomes impossible and he must look another way and do another duty, as though he turned from the light and walked into the dark. Yet it often happens

that this very facing about of life discloses its full significance, and that, as the author of "Ecce Homo" said, there are many things which have to be turned away from in order to be reached. The reversals of experience often lead to an unexpected light. As Clough once beautifully said, the dawn may disclose itself, not where the sun is to rise, but where its reflection is seen upon the hills before its rim reaches the horizon: —

> "For not by Eastern windows only
> When daylight comes, comes in the light,
> In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
> But Westward look! The land is bright."

XXXIV

THE VALLEY OF DECISION

Joel iii. 14.

"MULTITUDES, multitudes in the valley of decision,"—is not that a good description of the present age? Never, perhaps, were there so many decisions called for, concerning religious doubts, social problems, political questions; never so much secret searching of the heart concerning the right way of life. The mark of the present age is a question-mark. Its coat of arms, Henry van Dyke has said, is an "interrogation-point rampant, above three bishops dormant, with the motto 'Query.'" How are we to regard a time when multitudes find themselves in the valley of decision? Some people think it an evil time. Questioning, they teach, is a dangerous habit. To doubt is to sin. Hold fast, they say, the faith of the fathers. The valley of decision is a valley of the shadow of death. The age of the question-mark is one of the dark ages. Some people, again, think that such a time must be regarded as

inevitable, but as deplorable. It is a dreary, unfruitful, undetermined age, when effectiveness and initiative pause, while the multitude passes through the valley of decision. With what pathos, as of a beautiful dirge, Matthew Arnold describes himself as —

> "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born,
> With nowhere yet to rest my head,
> Like these on earth, I wait forlorn.
> Achilles ponders in his tent,
> The kings of modern thought are dumb,
> Silent they are, though not content,
> And wait to see the future come;
> Silent while care engraves the brow,
> Silent, the best are silent now."

And meantime what is the prophet's attitude toward an age of decision? It is the attitude neither of reaction nor of despondency. "The day of the Lord," he says, "is near in the valley of decision." The sun and the moon may be darkened and the heavens and earth shake, but the Lord will be the hope of His people. The valley of decision is the way of education, discipline, and hope. Through its shadow one passes into stability, maturity, personality, efficiency. The age of the question-mark must precede the age of the answer. The valley of decision is

the road to the mount of vision. The fundamental note of the present age is struck, not by Matthew Arnold, but by a greater poet: —

"Perplexed in faith but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

"He fought his doubts and gathered strength;
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them. Thus he came at length

"To find a stronger faith his own;
And power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone."

That is the gospel for the multitudes who are in the valley of decision.

XXXV

ABUNDANT LIFE

John x. 10.

ONE of the most distinguished men in this country once described in a public address what he called his creed. He disclaimed any intention of speaking in the name of religion. "I do not trench," he said, "on the province of spiritual guides." None the less, he was led to sum up his faith in what he called the triune formula of the joy, the duty, and the end of life. What is the joy of life? It is to use one's powers. And what is the duty of life? It is to do with thy might what thy hand finds to do. And what is the end of life? It is nothing else than life itself. So to live is to live more truly, wisely, effectively, abundantly, — that is at once joy, duty, and end. It is most interesting to observe a man who may be properly called, in the best sense, a man of the world, approaching so closely to the language of the Christian religion. Throughout the New Testament the aim of life is to gain

more life. "I am come," says Jesus, "that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." What is the reward of one's bodily exercise? It is the capacity to use the body more effectively. You train your life, and the result of your training is more life. What is the reward of keeping your temper? It is the capacity to keep your temper better. What is the consequence of doing your duty? It is the ability to do more duties. Out of the duty done opens the strength to do a larger duty. You have been faithful over a few things. and become the ruler over many things.

There is, however, one striking difference between the self-cultivating life and the Christian life. The man of the world finds the joy and duty and end of life in its increase of his own resources. The Christian teaching finds that joy and duty and end, not in getting, but in giving life. "I am come," says Jesus, not to secure more life for myself, but "that *they* may have life." "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "Death worketh in us," says the Apostle Paul, "but life in you." The triune formula of joy, duty,

and end, according to the Christian teaching, is discovered in the communicative and self-propagating nature of spiritual power. What is the joy of life? It is the discovery of the capacity to inspire life. And what is the duty of life? It is not acquisition, but service. And what is the end of life, or, in the language of the New Testament, its crown? It is not a crown of gold, or gems, which one may wear on his own head; it is, as the Book of Revelation says, "a crown of life," — the increase of capacity, the enrichment of opportunity, the chance to be of use, the power to say with Jesus Christ: "I give unto them eternal life."

XXXVI

WORK AND REWARD

Isaiah xl. 10.

"HIS reward is with him, and his work before him." That seems a surprising statement of the order of events. Should not the phrases be transposed so that we might read: "His work is with him and his reward before him"? First, we should say, comes work, and later, the reward of work. First, the new day invites one to his task, and then some day perhaps one may get his reward. First the work of the world, and later the successes of the world. First one's life here, and then the reward of peace and joy in heaven. The prophet, however, reverses this common view. The rewards of life, he says, are immediate and inherent, while the work of life stretches away before one into the distance. Not beyond the work, but within it, lies its reward. The work, as Robert Louis Stevenson said, *is* the reward. After the reward is gained, there is more work left to do.

Nothing is stranger, as one observes the experience of life, than to find this order of events prove true. A man begins his work anticipating a reward which is to follow it, but this reward of gratitude, or honor, or profit, or praise, is discovered to be the most illusory of hopes. He anticipates thanks and he receives thanklessness; or success and he seems to fail. Then he turns back to his work again, — the work which seemed unrewarding, and he finds that this work, just as it is, gives the real satisfaction of life. "His reward is with him," in the pleasure of effort, in the joy of acquisition, in the happiness of contributing to the world's work. It is an inalienable reward, independent of praise or blame, of success or failure. It is not a consequence of the work, but the work itself. Then, on the other hand, while his reward is with him, his work is before him. That is one of the greatest blessings in life, that at each step in one's experience there is work left to do. In fact, when the deeper issues of life have to be met, and one passes through the valleys of sorrow or humiliation, here is one's chief resource, — that "his work is before him." I met a man not long ago whom I knew to be in sore trial,

and asked him how he bore his life. "Thank God," he said, "I still have my work to do." That was his chief source of consolation. The very work which had often seemed so irksome and laborious was supporting him in his distress. Tranquillity, independence, peace, — all these are his who has found that each day brings with it a sure reward, and that beyond the reward of to-day opens the vista of more work to do. A man is free from the vicissitudes of the world when "his reward is with him and his work is before him."

XXXVII

PERSONALITY AND DEMOCRACY

Isaiah xxxii. 2.

"AND a man shall be . . . as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The words make a picture of the land where they were written. If the prophet had been speaking in some Western country, he might have said, "Like the shadow of a great tree;" but in Palestine one must look a long way to find a tree. The hills are denuded of their forests, the soil has been washed away, and, as a traveller once said, the country looks as if it had been stoned for its sins. The only shelter from the burning sun is behind some great boulder, standing erect in the parched and sterile land. So, says the prophet, stands the strong man in a weary world. People hide behind him from the changing wind of opinions and the fierce gusts of temporary passion. They know where to find him, and lean on him for strength. He is unmoved and firm, like a great rock.

When, however, we turn from the primitive

civilization of the Hebrew people to a modern democracy, what becomes of this power of personality? Is there not less significance for the individual and greater dependence upon majorities, or organizations, or masses of men? Is it not true, as Tennyson says, that

"The individual withers and the age is more and more"?

Do not we expect to reform society by external or mechanical changes rather than by personal leadership? Do not people say to us, "The shadow of a great rock in a weary land is to be found behind our platform, or party, or creed"? Was not Matthew Arnold right when he said that the Americans had but one sacred book, the Book of Numbers? On the contrary, the history of a democracy, as of all other forms of social organization, is fundamentally a history of great men. Behind the power of numbers lies the power of personality. Our national progress is summed up in a few great names: Washington and Lincoln, Hamilton and Jefferson, Emerson and Lowell. And never was the effect of persons upon masses so obvious as it is today. Business has been revolutionized by a few inventors. National destiny has been

determined by a few reformers. Education has been directed by a few leaders. The more the machinery of the world becomes developed, the more scope and effect are given to the teaching or action of the individual. Never was there such a need for men as in this country to-day. A newspaper article on contemporary politics is headed "Wanted, A Spinal Column," and the phrase is but the modern equivalent for the prophet's saying, "A man shall be . . . as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The test of a democracy is not in its capacity to produce goods, but in its capacity to produce leaders. Democracy rests on personality. A weary land looks for men to-day as a weary traveller in Palestine looks for the shadow of a great rock.

XXXVIII

ON HAVING AN INFLUENCE

John x. 4.

MUCH questionable advice is given to young people about having an influence. It is said that one must so conduct himself as to have a good influence over his companions or his college; and of course there is much reasonableness in this exhortation. When, however, such advice involves anything like posing as an example, or being conscious of having an influence, then to any healthy-minded youth it appears to strike a false note of character. Such a youth answers, in the first place, that he is not fit to have an influence, that he is an unimportant person who has quite enough to do to take care of himself. Still further, such a young man views with suspicion the attitude of a model or a mentor. Posing or pretence of superiority are to him the most obnoxious of faults. The profession of doing good, Robert Louis Stevenson said, is one of the professions that is full.

When, however, one looks deeper into this matter of influence, he sees that it is not a question of choice or conscious design, but an inevitable and an inherent relation from which one cannot escape. A man need not concern himself to inquire whether he has an influence. All he has to do is to live, and the influence of his life will follow him as surely as his shadow. This is what St. Paul meant when he said that we were "members one of another." The foot does not say to the hand, "I will be a good example, and exercise a healthy influence on the hand;" for the members of the body are inevitably and inextricably bound together, so that health or disease in any part necessarily affects the whole. A young man, therefore, has but to go his own way, as modestly and quietly as he may desire, and his influence on other members of the social body of which he is a part is as certain as the functions of physiology. The life of a whole community is sometimes transformed in its ideals and aims by a person who has never thought of posing as an influence or of setting an example, but has gone his own way, which others want to follow. The life of a college has been purified by individuals who

have never dreamed of themselves as saviours, but who have spread the contagion of simplicity and excellence. There is a famous sermon of Horace Bushnell's, whose text is from the end of the fourth Gospel, where Peter and another disciple come to the sepulchre and hesitate. Then Peter, without exhortation or discussion, simply does the next thing that is set before him, and goes into the tomb; and the other disciple, who had come first to the door, takes courage and goes in also, and as the passage says, "sees and believes." The same lesson is taught by Jesus when in the same Gospel he speaks repeatedly of his mission as that of a shepherd, who when he puts forth his sheep, goes before them. It is the Oriental way of shepherding. The flock is not, as with us, driven; it is led. The shepherd need not even look behind. "The sheep follow him: for they know his voice." No one ever thought less of being an example than Jesus Christ. He just goes his own way, and the world has seen that it is the way to go and falls into line behind. His method is not that of compulsion, but that of attraction. He does not drive; he draws.

XXXIX

STAND IN YOUR LOT

Daniel xii. 13.

ONE mark of moral cowardice is the desire to escape from the special circumstances of one's own lot. If, one says, I were only in a more propitious environment, then I might be happy or useful or at peace. My church is narrow and bigoted, and I must escape from it in order to be free. My friends are frivolous and coarse, and I must avoid them if I would be undefiled. My work is one of routine and drudgery, and I must find something more stimulating and ennobling to do, if I am to grow in skill or force.

Now, of course, there are circumstances where the only honest action is to run away. If your religious life is brought to an issue between truth and falsehood, if your acquaintances are degraded and vicious, if your work is disreputable or degrading, then it cannot be asserted that you should endure such conditions. In general, however, where there is

no unmistakably moral issue, the word of the prophet is a wholesome teaching: "Stand in thy lot." Are you confronted with a theological issue? It may become your duty to withdraw, but the presumption is that you were set where you are to testify to the legitimacy and redemptive power of the larger truth, and unless conscience or ecclesiastical law positively intervenes, should stand in your lot. Is there a lowering of tone among your companions? It may, of course, become your duty to abandon such companionship, but you should first of all consider whether you should not stand in your lot with the rest and make it better. I remember just such a case, — the case of a young man, who, instead of deserting his companions, found the opportunity of college life in remaining with them and communicating the contagion of his excellence. Do the routine and drudgery of life threaten you with spiritual atrophy? The first problem of the Christian life is, not to escape these repressive conditions of life, but to enter into the lot in which millions of people must necessarily stand, and to discover in it significance and beauty. In short, there are two ways in which one may regard his relation with the

world. One is the view that you are to save yourself from the world; the other is the view that you are to save the world through yourself. One is the monastic view of the world, as a wreck from which one must escape; the other is the human view of the world, as a vessel which one is set to bring to port. The monastic ideal, with all its beauty, is the view of a runaway. The human ideal is the view of a soldier. It takes the world as it is given, and utilizes the material which is put into its hands. Here is a potter moulding his clay. He does not wash his hands of it lest they should be soiled; he does not dabble in it like a little boy for the joy of getting dirty; he takes it just as it is, and moulds from it the shapes of usefulness or beauty which are possible under the limits of the clay. Just such material is set before one in the modern world; and the problem of life is, not to escape from the world because it is unclean, or to surrender to its uncleanness, but to stand in one's lot and shape one's material to the use and beauty which it may bear. What is all this but to fulfil the great saying of Jesus Christ: "If any man will come after me, let him . . . take up his cross, and follow me." His

own cross, one should remember, not that of another, not even the cross of Christ, but the responsibilities, burdens, problems, of his own lot. Standing with that burden on his shoulder and carrying it like a man, he walks, stumblingly it may be, but steadily, to the end of his days.

XL

THE SIN OF CAIN

Genesis iv. 9.

WHAT is the special sin of the academic life, the peculiar temptation of the social environment of education? It is not, as many anxious parents are apt to fancy, the temptation of gross vice or dissipation. Nothing could be more exaggerated than to imagine a college beset with special perils or downright sins. On the contrary, the temptations of the academic world are not to be compared with those which confront a young man who instead of entering college enters business life. An academic community is peculiarly sheltered from many solicitations of evil. One sin, however, is very characteristic of our conditions. It is the sin of irresponsibility, the temptation to the self-centred, self-sufficient, and self-absorbed career. A schoolboy, coming from a comfortable home, is from the beginning of his education tempted to think with seriousness of little except his own lessons, his own sport, his own allowance

of money, his own vacation; and when his holidays arrive, an adoring family are apt to increase this tendency to self-reverence. A young man coming to college has for his central problems his own studies, his own advancement, his own companionships, his own career. It is the same even with the scholar's life. He is an isolated person. There is an essential solitude in the higher learning, and the scholar is sorely tempted to shut out from himself the things of the world, and to ask of public interests or obligations, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Now it is interesting to remember that this social irresponsibility was almost the first of human sins, the sin of Cain. He had little to say against his brother; he simply felt no responsibility for him. "Where is Abel thy brother?" said the Lord to Cain, and he answered, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" Even while he thus protested that he was not his brother's keeper, however, he was responsible for his brother's death. "The voice of thy brother's blood," said God, "crieth unto me from the ground." It is the same today. Many a life has been wrecked in college because no brother put out his hand. "Where

is Abel thy brother?" says God, and his classmates answer, "We know not." I remember, at a time when fidelity and public spirit were much needed among us, that a father said: "I told my boy not to get mixed up in the matter;" and one ally of righteousness was lost to us through his father's fault. The sin of the father was visited upon the son, and the brother's blood cried out to him from the ground. And on the other hand, many a timid, lonely, and disheartened boy among us has been steadied and strengthened, not by any patronage or posing or parade, but simply by the strength of the brother's hand, and the sense of the brother at his side. When Henry Drummond of Glasgow was here some years ago, he told us of a young American student in Scotland who had received his Bachelor's degree, but who, on returning for a further year of study, failed to receive the higher degree at the year's close. It was not until years afterward that Drummond knew how that apparently unproductive year had been spent. At last a man confessed to Drummond that he had been tempted while in Glasgow by the drink-habit, and that the young American came back to help him. He did not lecture or preach, but became the

room-mate of his friend, and throughout the year held him to his best and steadied him in his resolution, until at last the devil of drink was expelled, and the man who had come so near to ruin dedicated himself to the career of a medical missionary. Then the American was ready to return to his country, having missed his Master's degree, but having won his brother's soul.

XLI

THE SUN AND THE SHIELD

Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

NOTICE the comprehensiveness of this confession. The Lord God is both a sun and that which shields from the sun. He is the light, and that which guards from the light. When it is dark God shows the way, and when the light is too dazzling God protects us from the glare. It is the psalm which Sir Walter Scott transcribed in his hymn:—

> "But present still, though now unseen,
> When brightly shines the prosperous day,
> Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen
> To temper the deceitful ray."
>
> "And O, when stoops on Judah's path
> In shade and storm, the frequent night,
> Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
> A burning and a shining light."

Most people in their religious experience think of God as a shield. He stands between them and the storm. They hide beneath the shadow of His wings. It is the religion of

special Providence and of Divine interposition. God shields His people from the burning heat. Religion is a protective system, a very present help in time of trouble. Some people, on the other hand, think of God as a sun. When all is bright and cloudless, then they can believe, but when it storms, then the universe seems God-less. When God is in heaven, all's right with the world. I remember a comfortable and church-going citizen who was overtaken by a great domestic sorrow, and said of it: "It never occurred to me that such a thing could happen." He had grown so in the habit of living in the sunshine that he was as helpless as a child in the dark. The faith of the Psalmist is comprehensive. He is like a man who watches the changing sky and delights in the alternations of nature. He does not say that the sunshine is glorious and the cloud dreary, that the day is welcome and the night forbidding. Nature is one sublime and precious reality, with its sun that tints the clouds, and its clouds that temper the sun; with the golden day that dawns out of the night, and the silver stars which night alone reveals. He is able to sing the most perfect of modern hymns: —

"Through all the various shifting scene
Of life's mistaken ill or good
Thy hand, O God! conducts unseen
The beautiful vicissitude."

This is rational religion. To try to keep religion in one part of life is to have it slip away altogether; to make it occasional and intermittent is to make it unreal. The Lord God is a sun, even if that sun smites fiercely; the Lord God is a shield, even if that shield hides from us many truths we want to see. It is all one world. "The darkness," says the Psalmist, "hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

XLII

INFIDELITY

Hebrews iii. 12.

"AN evil heart of unbelief," — that has always seemed to Christians a terrible sin. Infidelity, unbelief, — these have been from the beginning condemned, both by the Church and by the New Testament. Books are still written to expose the infidelity of the present age, and church Councils meet to try the unbelievers. But who are the infidels, and what is it to have an evil heart of unbelief? How surprised Jesus would have been, if he had been told that followers of his could ever confound infidelity with incorrectness or incompleteness of opinion. He met one day a soldier, whom perhaps he had never seen before, and reading that man's heart he said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." He sees two men fishing in their boat, and says to them, "Follow me," and as they are responsive to his call, they become fit to be his apostles. So he goes his great way, accepting many who had been called unbe-

lievers, rejecting many who had been called orthodox, dividing people by new principles of classification, and welcoming the self-distrustful confession, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

What, then, is infidelity? It consists, answers this verse, in "departing from the living God." And what is the living God? It is one's real best, the real object of one's reverence and worship, the God who is alive to you. To turn deliberately and consciously away from that which one knows to be his best, to withdraw one's self from this Divine attraction, to turn one's back upon this invitation of the Spirit, — that is to be an infidel, faithless to the revelation offered to his own soul, sinning, as Jesus said, the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost. A young man comes to the university, the object of many loving prayers in his devoted home, and he prefers the darkness to the light, the service of the Devil to the service of God. That is infidelity; the evil heart of unbelief. An older man, to whom truth has once been a commanding ideal, loses faith in that ideal, sees the vision splendid fade into the light of common day, and settles into a comfortable

cynicism as a passive stay-at-home in a world that needs just such men as he. That again is an infidel. He has departed from the living God. In short, unbelief is not an intellectual but a moral sin; it is the Godless life; it is practical atheism. The opposite of faith is not heresy, but faithlessness. The opposite of infidelity is not orthodoxy, but fidelity. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of us this evil heart of unbelief.

XLIII

THE YOUNG IDEALIST

Hebrews xi. 27.

MOSES, according to general tradition, was brought up in the luxury and abundance of the wonderful land of Egypt, living as a prince, learning the philosophy of the Egyptians, watching the marvellous river as it fed the land with its fertilizing stream. He was a young man just coming, this passage says, "to years;" and might well have been overwhelmed by the flood of luxury as the fields of Egypt were covered by the flood of the Nile. The spectacle, however, produced in him a spiritual revulsion. The more prodigal was the abundance about him, the more he dreaded its influence upon himself and upon his people. He saw that the spirit of materialism and commercialism was eating the fibre out of the nation's heart, and that it was losing "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Thus this young idealist chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a

season." He endured, this writer says, "as seeing Him who is invisible." He dedicated himself to the leadership of his people out of this land of splendid bondage. Beyond the comfort of the present he saw the hardship of the desert, but beyond the desert he saw the vision of a holy people and the worship of the true God. By faith he forsook Egypt, and the country which seemed so safe from vicissitudes was soon submerged by the stream of its own prosperity, and its power withered before the Northern invaders as though the land were touched by a Northern frost.

There is much in all this story which has a very modern note. Never, perhaps, since the days of Egypt has there been a time or a country so seriously threatened by its own prosperity as this country, in this very year. Never was there such concentration of capital, and never such distribution of wages. We are the richest people in the world. Precisely here, however, is the peril of the time. We are not the first nation which has found in its abundance the seed of its decline. Egypt became the spoils of Greece, and Greece in turn of Rome, and Rome, again, of the unspoiled Goths. And at such a time, who are

to rescue a nation from its materialism? It is the task of the idealists to teach a people that if they would endure, they must see Him who is invisible. And who are our natural idealists? They are our young men, just coming, as this passage says, "to years." Your young men, said the prophet, shall see visions. The hope of idealism in a commercial age is where such young men congregate in the presence of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. A university exists to direct one's mind to other interests than those of money-making. A university, as one of the leaders of American education has said, is "a home of idealism. If it were not, it would be better that its walls should crumble in a night." The final justification of a university is not in its collections of material, but in its training of young men just coming to years, so that they shall look past the gains which allure a nation and save the nation's soul. If we are to be rescued from the fate which overtook the splendors of Egypt and Greece and Rome, it must be through the faith of the young idealists, who are obedient to their vision and endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

XLIV

STANDING WATCH

Habakkuk ii. 1.

THERE is no mistake about religion which is more paralyzing than the notion that, in this relation between God and man, God alone is active, and that there is no need of alertness and effort on the human side. People give themselves most passionately to the getting of other things, — money, power, friends, or learning, — but they sometimes fancy that the peace and power of religion can be got without cost. They quote Mr. Lowell's lines: —

> "'T is heaven alone that is given away,
> 'T is only God may be had for the asking,"

forgetting that this asking of God involves a profound and eager desire. The earlier theology was much to blame for this impression. "Cast it all on Jesus," it was said; "Leave all to God;" "Oh, to be nothing, nothing!" These phrases are in fact utterances of religious fatalism, and they tend to promote spiritual laziness and moral irresponsibility.

There are very few things in this world worth having which can be had cheaply. What we have come to call the strenuous life is essential to all acquisition. One cannot get his living for the asking; he must work for his living. Why should it require less persistency and alertness to find a God than is necessary to find a dollar? I once heard a young man remark that the name of God had lost to him all significance. When, however, he was asked whether his interests, reading, and companionships had been such as to keep the spiritual life real and near, he was frank enough to answer that he had never given a thought to such matters for years. He had been living in quite another world, but he fancied that if religion were real, it would somehow break into his world by force.

Over against this spiritual indolence stands the doctrine of the Bible. It constantly reiterates the demand for personal initiative. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks," says the Psalmist, "my soul thirsteth for God." Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart." "Watch therefore," says Jesus, "for

ye know not when the time is." "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," says the Book of Revelation, but it is a door which one must open with his own hand from within. "If any man . . . open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him." Still more picturesque is the attitude of this prophet toward God. "I will stand upon my watch," he says, "and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me." The prophet is a sentinel, pacing to and fro upon his tower, and looking out over the plain for the coming of the reinforcements of God. Or again, he is a sailor on his watch, peering from his vessel through the fog to find the pilot who shall take him into port. Some of you have seen, on an ocean steamer, the officer of the watch on the bridge, peering thus out toward the horizon. Sometimes he cannot see a ship's length ahead; sometimes the sky is blue and serene before him; but always there is a man standing watch, to see what may meet him; and in the sense of that alertness on the bridge the passengers rest in peace below. Such is the discipline and preparedness which the voyage of life demands. We speak of such a man as being "on deck;" and the trouble

with a great part of the religious world is that it is not on deck, but is snugly below, like cabin passengers, with no officer on the bridge. "I will stand upon my watch," says the prophet. No man can tell another when the exigencies of life are to arise or its storms of temptation to be met. No good seaman waits until the storm has struck to go on deck, and no mystery of experience is so startling as the abrupt, unanticipated, and surprising ways in which the shifting weather of life suddenly tests the human soul.

"Oh to be up and doing, O!
Unfearing and unshamed to go
In all the uproar and the press
About my human business!
. . . . . .
But ye? O ye who linger still
Here in your fortress on the hill
With placid face, with tranquil breath,
The unsought volunteers of death,
Our cheerful General on high,
With careless looks may pass you by."

XLV

LABORERS WITH GOD

1 *Corinthians* iii. 9.

"WE are laborers together with God,"—this is the most audacious and yet the most humbling statement of the religious life: God and man coöperate. Efficiency in human life consists in discovering the laws of God and accelerating their movement. All invention, all discovery, all manufacture, is a labor together with God. God's will creates, man's will adapts. God gives the iron and coal; man shapes the first into his engine, and converts the second into his steam, and goes flying on his way. God leads a soul into the experience of trouble or perplexity or care; and the soul, working with God, discovers the significance of this experience and adapts it to service. This is the essence of religion, the acceptance of the will of God as the direction of one's own will.

"Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

There is, however, another side to the same

truth. Suppose that a man labors, not with God, but against Him; suppose he attempts to thwart the law of righteousness or truth, then what happens? He may, of course, deceive himself, or even ruin himself; yet in the terrible irony of Providence he also is comprehended in the purposes of God and made a contributor to that end which he seems to defy. A man like Napoleon appears to thwart the purpose of God in the history of Europe, yet the will of God works through him and in spite of him, and he becomes a contributor to the education of the race. A man like Judas seems to stand straight across the path of the mission of Jesus, but the will of God sweeps even the traitor into His purpose, and Judas becomes the instrument of the Divine intention. Thus there is a certain impotence in the life of evil. One can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. The liar, the licentiate, the cheat, may seem to succeed. The lie is believed, the lust is satisfied, the cheat is undiscovered; but in the irony of fate these refugees from the Divine law come to wear even in their faces the mark of their sin, and add but new proofs to the law which they have defied. The

conduct of life, then, becomes like the experience of the brave Nansen in his attempt to reach the Pole. Men had struggled Northward through weary days from the Greenland side, only to find at the end of each day's march that they had been swept farther South by a current which moved the whole pack of ice beneath their feet. Then the Norwegian explorer made himself a laborer together with God, through the Siberian approach, and gave himself to the mighty sweep of the polar current, so that the law which he had discovered bore him toward the realization of his dream. It is the same with every honest desire to do right. The current of God's laws is under you; the movement of things is with you; you are a laborer together with God, and you sing at your work:—

> "Why labor at the dull mechanic oar
> When the fresh breeze is blowing,
> And the swift current flowing,
> Right onward to the eternal shore?"

XLVI

THE TREE AND THE LEAVEN

Matthew xiii. 31–33.

ONE of the most striking facts about the Kingdom of God, as described by Jesus, is that it is like so many things. It is like a sower and like a field; it is like a fisherman with his nets and like a merchant with his pearls; it is like things that are near and things that are far away; it is to come in glory and it is to come without observation. All that Jesus sees is suggestive to him of his comprehensive vision of the Kingdom. All that helps the world will help the Kingdom. All sorts of talents and types contribute to the realization of the better world. Yet in this series of pictures there sometimes appears to be a certain orderliness and sequence. Having used one figure of speech, Jesus seems to look for another which may amplify or enrich his thought. The Kingdom, for instance, in this passage, is to be like a great tree, in which the birds of the air will lodge; and again, the Kingdom is to be like

leaven, which will leaven the whole lump. Both of these figures illustrate the principle of growth and expansion. The tree puts out its branches above, the leaven spreads from within. It is not impossible, however, that this sequence of ideas discloses to us the mind of Jesus as it penetrates to the deeper meaning of his message. The first way of growth may have seemed to him to make an insufficient picture until the second conception of the Kingdom is superadded. The Kingdom will indeed spread like a great tree until it overshadows all the world; but, he goes on, it will not spread as a tree until it expands as leaven, and the external and visible Kingdom will wait until the spiritual and invisible Kingdom has been realized within the heart.

Of course, we cannot be sure that such a sequence of illustrations was designed to be significant, but it certainly indicates a truth which the present age much needs to learn. When people in our time are looking for a better world, they are tempted to look for it as for the growth of a tree, by the way of outward expansion, multiplication of branches, complexity of organization; as though the

Kingdom were to come by simple increase of mass. The fact is, however, that the Kingdom cannot come as a tree until it has worked as leaven, quietly and silently, penetrating from the motives and ideals of the few into the lives of the many. "A golden age," Mr. Spencer once said, "cannot be made from leaden instincts." A better world must be created by better men. When Jesus, in another place, says that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them, that saying is often interpreted as an apologetic phrase, as though the spirit of the Master need not be wholly absent even among a very few. There is, however, no note of apology in the saying itself; it is, on the contrary, a definition of the method of Jesus. His way of teaching was to seek, not the crowd, but the individual. He saved men one at a time; he concerned himself not with conspicuous undertakings, but with the quiet intimacies of personal life. He pictured the Kingdom as coming like a great tree; but his own work for the Kingdom was by the method of the leaven. It must be the same to-day. Not to the crowd, but to the two or three, come the profounder

messages of the spirit. In quiet moments like these, where two or three are met together in his name, the spirit of Jesus is most naturally and effectively present. And after the parable of the leaven is fulfilled, and the self-effacing, unassuming, consecrated life has permeated the social mass, then may follow the parable of the great tree, and the community, or the university, or the nation, may become at last the Kingdom of God.

XLVII

DEFEATS

Galatians vi. 14.

IT is a curious fact that many of the events most reverently commemorated in this neighborhood were occasions of defeat. On April 19, 1775, the British regulars marched gallantly out to Lexington and Concord, and the minutemen fled after the first volley. On the 16th of June in the same year, the little company of New England farmers formed on the green near our Law School and marched away to Bunker's Hill, but the next day saw them trooping back defeated, and the British with undaunted bravery had stormed the heights. Opposite the State House in Boston stands the beautiful monument which commemorates the charge of Colonel Shaw and his black regiment at Fort Wagner. This also was a defeat. The attack was repulsed, and the young Harvard hero was, as the report of the battle said, "buried with his niggers." Yet these events have become our most honorable memories.

The scattered volleys of the Colonials at Concord were a shot heard round the world; the defeat at Bunker's Hill proved that the Colonists could stand against British regulars; and the negroes at Fort Wagner earned the right to be treated as men. The lost battles were the prophecy of victory; the defeats were the seed of power.

There are times like these in the experience of almost every life. You come to a point where you must frankly say, "This time I am beaten. Here is an overwhelming defeat; the enemy was too strong; the position was impregnable." Yet as a rule the experience of defeat is the way to self-respect, self-confidence, and hope. Out of what seems disaster issues the capacity to win. Discomfiture teaches the conditions of success. Many a life has learned the insignificance of its apparent triumphs, and has cherished as most precious the lessons of its defeats. The humble, it is written, possess the Kingdom of Heaven; but humility, as Henry Drummond once said, is as a rule to be obtained only through humiliation. One should never forget that the cross of Jesus Christ, which was a sign of suffering, has become the symbol of spiritual victory. "In this

sign," the vision said to Constantine, "conquer." And the Apostle Paul, writing of that in which he may glory, says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

XLVIII

THE RETICENCE OF THE GOSPELS

John xiv. 2.

ONE of the most striking traits of the teaching of Jesus is its reticence concerning many things which one would like to know. Through all Christian history people have gone to the Gospels for answers to questions which seemed to them of the highest importance, and concerning which churches have quarrelled, and have been met by silence. It was the same with the first disciples of Jesus. They bring him their questions about his own fate and he answers, "Let not your heart be troubled: I go to prepare a place for you." They ask him whither he is going, and he replies, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you," as though it were not necessary that he should tell them more. They bring him even the most elementary wish: "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," and he answers, "How sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Finally,

he explains this reserve of teaching by adding: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

How profound a lesson there is in this reticence of Jesus. Many a teacher has failed of his task because he has tried to impart too much, and has not been able to say to his pupil: "I have other things to teach, but ye cannot bear them now." Many a religious movement has failed because it demanded certainty about uncertain things, and left no room for reticence, reserve, or growth. Many a friendship is too insatiable in expression, forgetting that an absolute sympathy need not be fortified by many words:—

> "I count that friendship little worth
> Which has not many things untold,
> Sweet longings that no words can hold,
> And passion secrets waiting birth."

It is the same with Christian discipleship. It is a habit of mind which is not inquisitive and insistent, but patient and expectant. It can afford to be ignorant of many things. Its heart is not troubled. When the Spirit of truth is come, it will guide us into all truth. "One step enough for me," says the loyal

disciple. He goes his way in the companionship of his Master, without excessive curiosity, and across the silences of life the Teacher says, "If it were not so, I would have told you."

XLIX

THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

Psalm xcvi. 9.

"THE beauty of holiness," says the more familiar reading, but the Revised Version corrects the translation so that the suggestion of the phrase is lost. The change of meaning would commend itself to some readers because they are in grave doubt whether holiness is in reality a state of which beauty can be affirmed. Is it not rather true that a saint is as a rule an unlovely, bloodless creature, whom one must regard as good, but whom one cannot regard as beautiful? Many conscientious Christians have found it almost impious to associate beauty with holiness. They have banished from their religion the charm of music and art, and have worshipped a stern, law-giving, Old Testament God. On the other hand, and by the most natural of reactions, many people have been led to believe that if holiness is without beauty, beauty may be without holiness. The beautiful, they have said, how-

ever unholy it may be, is adorable. "Art for art's sake" is a sufficient guide. The nakedness of beauty is fairer than the ugliness of holiness. Asceticism reacts into æstheticism.

What, however, is the real relation of holiness to beauty? Each is in its own language an expression of the perfect. Holiness is but another name for wholeness, and to become holy is to approach the symmetry and completeness of the spiritual life. But is not beauty also the vision of the perfect, the hearing of the perfect harmony, the outline of the perfect form? We speak of a work of art as "perfectly beautiful." It realizes, we mean to say, the ideal of its object as a perfect whole. One of our own philosophers has said that the joy with which one contemplates the beautiful is the joy of seeing something at last which is perfect. Thus it has happened throughout all history that art has been the natural expression of religion. Whenever the beautiful has been the symbol of holiness, there art has had a renaissance, and when this idealism has faded, then art has languished. Greek art rose with Greek idealism, and when art for art's sake dominated the

national mind, then began the decadence of Greece. And what shall we say of the modern literature, which is so clever and brilliant in technique, but which has no taste for holiness? Can it find the perfect art in the sewers of life? Is the scum of experience its reality? Does one see the bottom of things when he stirs up the mud? Great art and great literature wait now, as always, for a renaissance of idealism. What cannot be taught in speech may be said through the symbolism of art, and the perfection of which one's thought dimly conceives may be realized in the "perfectly beautiful." Thus there is one aspect of religion in which it addresses the reason, where the truth makes man free, and another aspect of religion in which it prompts conduct, and by doing the will one comes to learn the doctrine; but there remains a third aspect of holiness in which one is not so much a truth-seeker or a duty-doer as a contemplator of the beautiful life. The Old Testament taught as its reward of virtue that men should "see the King in His beauty," and when the New Testament describes the perfect character, it speaks of the "grace of Jesus Christ," that graciousness of

manner, conduct, and voice, which can only be described as beautiful, and which the lover of the beautiful may contemplate with unmixed and lofty joy.

L

SYMMETRY

Colossians ii. 10.

"AND ye are complete in him," says the Apostle. No mistake about religion is more persistent than the notion that it is chiefly concerned with giving up things. You give up your pleasures, your happiness, your freedom of thought and action, and then you seem to be on the way to be a Christian. Religion becomes a process of subtraction; it tells you the things which you may not do. Renunciation, self-denial, "*Entsagen*," as Carlyle called it, is the aim of the Christian life. The monk and the hermit are the saints of the church. All this is in sharp contrast with the spirit of the New Testament. "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." "I am come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." "Of his fulness have we all received." "Ye are complete in him,"—these are the great words which strike the full, rich chord of the Christian character. The Christian ideal is, not of negation but of appreciа-

tion, not of emptiness but of fulness, not of deformity but of symmetry.

Suppose, for instance, that one has an imperfectly developed and sickly body; what is the religious duty of his physical life? His religious duty is, not to neglect or scorn this weak and inefficient body, but to build it up into symmetry. I have read of one saint in the early church who had visions which he thought were spiritual longings, but found one day that the real reason for his vague dreams was that he had become terribly hungry. He had starved his body for the sake of his soul, and had mistaken emptiness for holiness. It is the same with one's thought. To think straight, to acquire intellectual grasp and perspective, to escape from one-sidedness and narrowness into intellectual symmetry, is a part of the religious life. "*Denken*," said Hegel, "*ist auch Gottesdienst.*" To think, that also is to worship. It is the same with one's conduct. Many a man expends his moral energy in tearing down sins when he ought to be building up goodness. It is the story of the man who cast out one devil and into his empty house thronged seven others, so that his last state was worse than the first.

Nature abhors a vacuum. The only way to overcome evil is to overcome it with good. Finally, the same thing is true of religion. What religion desires is not a truncated piece of a man, but a whole man, healthy, happy, natural, and free. Religion is not a January thaw of sentimentalism, but a clear, vigorous, frosty morning, which stirs one's energy and steadies one's nerves. Religion means not less life but more life, not subtraction of power but multiplication of power, not emptiness but fulness. I remember hearing it said of Phillips Brooks that he seldom preached a sermon without using in it the word "richness," and it was certainly a word most characteristic of him. Life to that great prophet was ineffably rich, and to realize and share the richness of experience, to accept the rich privilege of life with a chaste body, an alert mind, a sensitive imagination, and a steady will, — that was but to repeat the great promise of this passage, "Ye are complete in him."

LI

THE CHANGELESSNESS OF GOD

Psalm cii. 27.

(For the New Year.)

WHEN one stands at the beginning of a new year, he is first of all impressed by the fact of change, the transition from the old to the new.

> "Ring out the old,"

he sings, —

> "Ring in the new;
> Ring out the false, ring in the true,
> Ring out the narrowing lust of gold,
> Ring out the thousand wars of old;
> Ring in the valiant man and free,
> Ring in the Christ that is to be."

Yet behind this impressive fact of change there lies the much deeper and much more steadying idea of the changelessness of God. "The heavens . . . shall perish," says this psalm, "but Thou shalt endure." "As a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end." Bridging the chasm of years, spanning the gulf of the centuries, is

this continuous, inerrant, immutable unity of the purposes of God; and amid the changings and shiftings of time, which are like the changings of a garment, His years have no end.

It is this faith in the stability of God which sustains one in a world of change. The whole history of science, of logic, of human reasoning, is based upon this assurance of inviolability and consistency in the universe, and assumes that we have relations with the immutable. And when one turns to the experiences of life, the one hope of peace and confidence, and indeed of sanity, is in this certainty that our affections and ideals are untouched by the changing years. A man walks his way stumblingly through the dark, looking for truth, but he can go on with courage if he sees something fixed, a star above him to which he may look and toward which he may hold his way. A sailor steers his course across the pathless sea. He must veer one way and another as the wind may blow. What brings him to his port is the needle that points always true, and looking on which he may say: "Thank God, that in spite of head-winds and stormy seas I have one guide that does not swerve." Each experience of change thus

renews the demand for changelessness, the assurance that our lives are not the prey of the passing years, but are touched by the timelessness and immutability of God. "What is excellent," said Emerson, "as God lives, is permanent." We may put away the life of the passing year as we put away a vesture which is changed; but there are purposes and hopes whose years have no end, and one may pass tranquilly the artificial boundary of years because he is upheld by the Everlasting Arms.

> "It fortifies my soul,"

said a poet, who knew all the tragedy of change and the transitions of faith and fear, —

> "It fortifies my soul to know
> That though I perish, truth is so;
> That howso'er I stray and range,
> Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.
> I steadier step when I recall
> That though I slip, Thou dost not fall."

LII

SPRING IN NEW ENGLAND

Mark iv. 28.

THE coming of spring in New England is an extraordinary mingling of patience and abruptness, of delay and expectancy, of gradualness and precipitancy, of the imperceptible processes of growth and the sudden burst of foliage and flowers. Nature lingers through chilly days as though timid and hesitating, and there seems to be no deliverance from the barrenness of winter; but of a sudden the crocuses bloom on Southern slopes, and across the hillside the landscape is tinted with the delicate silver-grey of opening leaves. The new energy which has been stored away leaps forth into new life of verdure, fragrance, and song, until the precipitancy of spring is again supplanted by the gradualness of summer, and as the Gospel says, there appears: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn."

It is a parable of human life, and the parable answers many questions about the meaning

of experience. Life, like nature, is often very slow in its ways, and often very sudden. A great part of it is made up of routine, drudgery, education, habit, prayer, when nothing seems to happen. The days are overcast, sterile, and insignificant, and the fundamental virtue appears to be that of patience. Then, of a sudden, life is met by some terrific surprise; temptations leap out of ambush; opportunities approach in an instant, decisions must be made in a moment, and quite the opposite question presses upon one's mind. How can one be ready for such exigencies? How can one sleep with his armor on? How can one be safe in this instant attack? Instead of the gift of patience we need the opposite gift of alertness, responsiveness, mastery of these crises of fate. This alternation, however, of patience and expectancy, of monotony and surprise, is precisely what gives life its interest and significance. This is the way of growth, in man as in nature. Routine, detail, study, duty, prayer, are the storing up of energy for the sudden summons and the moment's need. One can no more meet a moral emergency without the habit of self-discipline than a plant can bud in spring

which has not stored up its growth in winter. The insight and courage of the instant are the bloom which unfolds from the daily duty done. When one comes to look back upon life, nothing is more impressive than to survey these alternations of experience, to recall the suddenness of life's demands, and to remember that they were met in the stored-up strength of remote and uneventful days. A poet, who once walked our Cambridge streets, and who knew much both of spiritual delays and of spiritual expectancy, repeats to us this parable of the New England spring: —

> "December days were brief and chill,
> The winds of March were wild and drear,
> And nearer, but receding still,
> Spring never would, we thought, be here.
> The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
> Had, none the less, their certain date,
> And thou, oh human heart of mine,
> Be still, refrain thyself, and wait!"

LIII

SPRING RAINS

Deuteronomy xi. 12–14.

THIS is a promise which has certainly been fulfilled in good measure this year, — that God would give us the rain of the land in due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that we may have grass for our cattle, and may eat and be full. The world of nature has been waiting for this abundant visitation of the rain, as though its baptism were the beginning of its new life, and this sacrament of power has descended in the rain to each stalk and root and made it ready to lift itself in verdure and bloom.

It is the same with that spring-time which comes to the human soul through the religious life. One of the most dangerous heresies about religion is the notion that in this experience we do it all, — that religion is an achievement, a research, a consequence of theology or philosophy. We speak of proving God, or of getting religion, or of finding Christ,

as though our religion were a self-developing growth, a supreme effort of the reason or the will. Of course, this element of initiative is as essential a part of religion as the self-development of the plant in the order of nature. Yet this lift of the reason toward truth is a response to the persuasion of God, like the answer of the plant to the persuasion of sunshine and rain. What the spring-time is in nature, that is religion in the soul. It is the concurrence of the inward desire with the Power from above. "We loved Him," says the Apostle, "because He first loved us." Antecedent to the growth of the soul is the descent of the rain of God. Before we prove God, He proves us. Before we find Christ, he finds us. The Prodigal's coming to himself was but the answer of his will to the call of the waiting Father. A mind which hides itself from these influences of the Eternal is like a plant in the dark, which becomes a colorless, meagre, spindly growth. The normal way of life is in the coöperation of the effort from within and the influence from above. Nothing is more mysterious, and yet nothing is more natural, than this spring-time of the soul. The life that has been unfruitful, ineffective,

sterile, wintry, greets the descending rain, and then there —

"Comes to soul and sense
The feeling which is evidence
That very near about us lies
The realm of spiritual mysteries. . . .
Then duty leaves to love its task,
The beggar Self forgets to ask;
With smile of trust and folded hands,
The growing soul in waiting stands
To feel, as flowers the sun and dew,
The One true Life its own renew."

LIV

SIN

Luke xviii. 10.

(Ash Wednesday.)

THIS is the first day of the season preceding Easter Sunday, which is observed by a large part of the Christian Church under the title of Lent. The name is derived, I believe, from the Anglo-Saxon word for spring. Lent is the spring fast. Ash Wednesday, the day of ashes, *dies cinerum*, was a day added to Lent, it is said, by Gregory the Great, as a day of special penitence. Sinners in the Middle Ages might present themselves at the door of the church, where the Bishop poured ashes on their heads as a sign of humiliation, and drove them from the church until Easter came.

Sin and repentance, thus dealt with, might well seem concrete and definite enough; but sin, as it is frequently talked of in the churches to-day, has an abstract, remote, and theological sound, as though it were a proposition to accept, instead of a weight of ashes on one's

head. People may believe in Sin with a capital "S," while taking small account of the sins in small letters, which are hidden in their own lives. They may call themselves miserable sinners, without observing the bearing of this general proposition on the fact that they are impatient, or ungrateful, or prejudiced, or worried, or cross. The first thing, therefore, to do with sin is to remove the capital letter, to forget the theology of repentance, and to speak with the utmost simplicity of one's own faults or blunders or stupidities. Then the attitude of repentance and confession becomes real and inevitable, and one may say with an honest heart: "God be merciful to me a sinner."

There is a further thing to remember in this confession. It is not only a reasonable act, but it is also a step to something better. The sense of sin has often brought with it a sense of helplessness, and of incurable alienation from God. "We are miserable sinners," says the prayer, "and there is no health in us." The fact is, however, that the confession itself is a sign of returning health. It is not the prayer of an incurable, but of a convalescent. When the publican says, "God be

merciful to me a sinner," he is by that very confession less a sinner. When the prodigal cries, "I am not worthy to be called thy son," he is at that very moment, as the passage says, "coming to himself." Health is best secured by recognizing one's limitations and confessing one's constitutional weaknesses. It is the same with character. When a man says, "I am quick-tempered, lazy, shy, reckless, slow. God be merciful to me a sinner," in that definite and specific confession he is on the way to self-discipline and self-control. The confession of sin meets him not on his way down, but on his way up. He is not contemplating a theological abstraction; he is facing his own moral risks; and from such a confession he goes down to his house justified, not because he is better than other men, but because he knows what is the matter with him and what he ought to do. The day of ashes is the first sign that the day of eternal life is near. It may seem midwinter, but the festival of the spring, which is to end in the festival of resurrection, has already begun.

LV

POPULARITY

Luke xix. 37.

(Palm Sunday.)

TO-MORROW is known to many Christians as Palm Sunday, the day of the entry of Jesus among welcoming throngs into Jerusalem. How abrupt and tragic is the change of public sentiment which is to come over these enthusiasts within the next few days! On this Sunday he passes the brow of the Mount of Olives with his little company of friends, and the whole population of the city meets him, and people throw their garments in his path and strew his way with branches. He is the most popular person in Jerusalem. Men would follow him and die for him, if he would but give the word. The tide of popularity ebbs, however, as quickly as it flows, and in four days the same people who were crying "Hosanna" are shouting "Crucify him, crucify him," and as we read, "their voices prevailed."

No one can live long without observing

many instances of this tragedy of popularity, the hero of one year forgotten the next, the applause fading into indifference, the popular judgment swayed by the changing wind of gossip or scandal or self-interest. Popularity ebbs and flows like a tide, and the man who is lifted up by it on a wave of self-conceit finds himself of a sudden stranded on the flats of despair.

How, then, does Jesus meet the shifting breezes of popularity? He seems to be absolutely unconcerned about them. He does not know or care how the wind blows. On Palm Sunday, while the shouts of the people are about him, he stands as if alone on the Mount of Olives and, looking over the valley to Jerusalem, weeps for the sorrows of the city; and on the following Thursday, when the people are crying "Crucify him," again he does not seem to hear them, but goes his way, undisturbed as he was before unflattered, peaceful in blame as in praise, and standing before Pilate as a criminal, says to him, "I am a king." That is the first teaching of Jesus as he approaches this last week of his life.

We live in a time of extraordinary publicity. Gossip, scandal, praise, and blame beset every

life, and many people are tempted to watch for applause or for censure as though they were tests of success. Politicians with their ears to the ground, journalists pandering to popular passion, preachers tickling the public ear, — these are signs of the times which reveal the itching for popularity. Even in our sports we talk of supporting players by organized noise, as though one could not even play a game at his best without dependence on applause. Yet in our time, as always, there is but one kind of man which in the end wins a worthy victory. It is the man who depends neither on praise nor blame. He leads his life instead of following it. There is but one commendation which he desires, — that of his own conscience. He has his Palm Sundays of appreciation, but they do not stir him to self-esteem; he has his Gethsemanes when friends desert him, but they do not depress him to despair. He does his duty and bears his cross; and finally he is remembered, not because he was popular or unpopular, but because he accomplished the work which was given him to do, and was so busy saving others that he had no time to save himself.

LVI

JESUS WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM

Luke xix. 41.

(Passion Week, Monday.)

THIS is the week which Christians commemorate as the anniversary of the last week in the life of Jesus Christ. The chronology of the Gospel story is in great part obscure. The different narratives assign a different order to many events. Toward the end, however, the paths of the different stories converge, and the last days of the life of Jesus may be traced with precision, as he proceeds from the triumph of Sunday to the death of Friday. To-day, then, we see Jesus as he comes up from Bethany over the brow of the Mount of Olives and receives the homage of the welcoming throng. The place where this happened is one of the most picturesque spots in the world. You come suddenly over the elbow of the hill and look across the intervening valley on the whole city, with the temple, the streets, and the pinnacles, spread out like a map at your feet. There Jesus met

what seemed his culminating triumph. One company had followed him from Bethany, another came from the city to join them, and just at this point the two streams of admirers met. It is the king, they said, coming to his own city. "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." But what is Jesus doing at this moment of his triumph? He is looking past this welcoming throng to the city which he wants to save, and as he looks he weeps over the foolish, frivolous, fickle scene. He sees the Roman soldiers parading in the streets; he sees the traders in the temple-area; he sees the lazy priests, sunning themselves on the temple steps. It is a political, commercial, ecclesiastical world, with no welcome for his spiritual message, and in the moment of what seems his triumph he stands and weeps.

Might not the spirit of Jesus stand with the same sense of sorrow amid much of the splendor of the modern world? The Roman soldiers paced the streets of Jerusalem then, and to-day the Christian nations are competing with each other, on a scale which Rome never knew, in recruiting their armies and building their navies for the un-Christian ends of war. The

commercialism of Jerusalem crowded into the temple until Jesus had to drive it out with a whip, but what would he say of the commercialism which threatens the foundations of American democracy and even of American religion? The ecclesiastics of Jerusalem were converting religion into an artificial form, and still the religion of Jesus suffers quite as much from its friends as from its enemies. Across the welcoming throngs and waving flowers of Palm Sunday, across the chasm of the years, looks the grave face of Jesus, as it looked across the valley into the city which he loved, and seeing the unprepared, unregarding, foolish, fickle world before him, he weeps over it, saying: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

LVII

THE TRIBUTE MONEY

Luke xx. 19–26.

(Passion Week, Tuesday.)

WE are tracing, day by day, the incidents of the last week of the life of Jesus. Each morning he comes from the seclusion of Bethany into the city, to deliver his message; and each morning he is met by questioners, who try, as this passage says, to "take hold of his speech." They are like inquisitors attempting to justify the condemnation which they have already determined to execute. The case of the tribute-money is of this kind. The man is not an honest inquirer. Titian has painted him as he was, a shrewd, artful spy, with his question carefully formulated so as to be unanswerable. If Jesus says that the Jews should pay a tax to Rome, then he should be rejected as a spurious Messiah. If, on the other hand, he says that they should not pay a tax to Rome, then he is a rebel and should be condemned. By the side of this shrewd inquirer stands, in

Titian's picture, the calm, stern, pitying face of Jesus, — the only adequate reproduction, by one of the great Masters, of the nobility and force which Jesus must have shown. The man's purpose is easy to read, and Jesus, reading that purpose, turns back the questioner upon himself. Holding up the penny, Jesus says: "Look at this coin with which you must pay your tax. The very face stamped upon it is your confession that you render to Cæsar what is his. I need not therefore discuss this question with you. You have answered it yourself. I ask you, however, another question. Are you willing to give to the King I serve as loyal an obedience as you give to Cæsar, or are you a better subject of your Governor than you are of your God? "And they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace."

Thus Jesus answered then, and now, in this modern world, with its pressing problems of divided allegiance, the same stern, pitying figure stands and makes the same demand. People ask him every possible question about his politics, his theology, his conception of the church, his view of divorce, or of wages, or of socialism. Sometimes they try to en-

tangle him in his replies, but he refuses to be ensnared, and with lofty satire turns back such questioners upon themselves. These matters, he says, are of great moment, and it is not surprising that you render to them your tribute of interest and loyalty. I, however, ask you a similar question. Are you giving to God the same devotion which you give to these admirable ends? You are a politician devoted to your Cæsar, your party, your cause. It is right and justifiable. A good cause needs a good servant. But are you giving as much time and thought to the service of your God as you are to the service of your party; or are you saying, as a Senator of the United States is reported to have said, that the Golden Rule has no place in politics? You are an ecclesiastic, passionately concerned for your church, your doctrine, your hierarchy, your authority. But are you, I now ask, in danger of becoming a priest rather than a prophet, a churchman rather than a Christian, an ecclesiastical mechanic rather than a spiritual power? You are a student, devoted to your work, your play, your hopes and ambitions. It is right and inevitable that this should be so. Render to

these ends all that is their due. But are you, on the same terms of unconstrained and happy loyalty, consecrating these academic aims to the service of your God, and translating your privileges here into ways of religious service? So Jesus stands before the modern inquirer as he stood that day in Jerusalem, — not as a culprit to be pitied, but as a judge to be heard; searching the motives of his inquisitors, until many a man who is rendering everything to Cæsar and nothing to God shrinks away and dares ask him no more questions.

LVIII

THE BOX OF OINTMENT

Matthew xxvi. 7.

(Passion Week, Wednesday.)

N each of these days which commemorate the last week of the life of Jesus we come on special incidents of peculiar pathos and significance. Thus, on this Wednesday, when Jesus has returned from Jerusalem to the home at Bethany, there is disclosed as almost nowhere else in the story of his life his appreciation of the beautiful. Most of his experience was so sombre in its character that this touch of æsthetic pleasure slants through it as a sunbeam strikes across a cloudy day, but this flash of artistic delight gives a new illumination to his career. Some critics have been puzzled by this acceptance of the costly ointment. Was not Judas, they ask themselves, right in saying that it should have been sold and given to the poor? Was it not extravagant and unjustifiable to waste so costly an offering? These critics, however, as often happens, are too profound

in their commentary. It is the simplicity of the scene which is its charm. The woman whose life Jesus has redeemed comes to him in her gratitude. What can she do for him as his fate approaches? She can, in fact, do nothing for him. She utters herself, therefore, through the symbolism of sacrifice, and Jesus cannot restrain his pleasure at this lavish outpouring of her heart. It comforts him to know that any one can care so much for him. It is like a strain of music to him, a touch of harmony where the world is full of discord. Within the stern work of the preacher of righteousness there is room for this appreciation of emotions which beauty alone can express.

It is the same in many experiences still. You are moved, for instance, by deep sympathy with a friend in need. What can you do for him? You can, it would seem, do nothing. He must bear his own cross in his own way. Then the symbolism of sacrifice comes to your help, the pressure of the hand, a word of greeting, the message of a flower. Helpless and impotent as such offerings may seem, they may carry more strength and hope than your wisest advice can bear, and some day years

after, your friend may turn to you and say: "You have done many things which no doubt have seemed to you more important, but you never helped any one more than when that day you held out your hand to me." Who can be sure what are the things which are worth his doing? Sometimes one reserves himself from these testimonies of friendship or gratitude in order to do this greater work, and in the end fails to do either. Sometimes one is tempted to ask of such an impulse to manifest his sympathy: "Is it after all worth while? Has the symbolism of sentiment a place for itself in this utilitarian world?" It is well at such times to remember that while many incidents of the life of Jesus have been lost to history, this unthrifty outpouring of spontaneous affection has remained among the permanent treasures of the world, so that the word of Jesus has come true: "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

LIX

THE INDIFFERENTIST

John xviii. 38.

(Passion Week, Thursday.)

AMONG the events which led up to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the most decisive was the interview of Jesus with Pilate. "Then led they Jesus . . . unto the hall of judgment: and it was early." This Roman governor is the perfect type of a man who refuses to take sides. He is the consistent indifferentist. He takes no interest in the case of this Jewish malefactor. He does not care how it shall be determined. He washes his hands of it, and only asks that he may be let alone. He is busy with more important subjects. Perhaps he is sleepy, for it is early. "Take ye him," he says, "and judge him according to your law. I find in him no fault at all. I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man." He retires behind his curtains and leaves Jesus to his fate. It soon becomes plain, however, that this neutrality is an impossible position. People had to take sides

about the case of Jesus Christ. Those that were not for him proved to be against him, and as for Pilate, the man who undertook to be on neither side, his very name is now known to us because in spite of himself he became a responsible agent of the death of Jesus Christ.

This type of character, marked by intellectual indecision and moral indifferentism, is a not unfamiliar product of academic life. "What have I," such a man says, "to do with public affairs, political decisions, or religious sympathies? I wash my hands of them. I have my own life to lead. All I ask is to be let alone." So the dilettante, the cynic, the indifferentist, withdraws himself to the privileges of the educated life. He has not learned that privilege involves obligation. He is a survival of the mediæval spirit, when the world's work had to be done by common people, and the elect minds might retire to the contemplative life of the monastic cell. It is instructive to remember that the last person who had a chance to serve the cause of Jesus Christ was of just this type, and that he became responsible for the death of Jesus, not through his hostility, but through his indifference.

He teaches us the limits of indifferentism. There are some subjects concerning which you are not called to decide. You do not understand them, and should confess your ignorance; but when it comes to the great issues of life, to duty, truth, loyalty, consecration, then each man must be counted. He cannot wash his hands of these things; he has to take sides, and the attempt to be on neither side throws him inevitably on the wrong side. The first lesson of this solemn day is the demand, not for certainty about all the mysteries of heaven and earth, but at least for deliverance from the sin of indifferentism, the very sin which brought Jesus to his death. "While it is yet early" this question must be answered: On which side are we to stand, with Pilate in his indifference, or with Jesus on his cross?

LX

THE CROSS

John xix. 12–19.

(Passion Week, Friday.)

THIS is the day of the cross, and while the theology of the cross has been involved in many controversies, the religion of the cross is unmistakable and plain. It teaches the world the permanent relation between suffering and saving. A saviour must as a rule be a sufferer. To help others, one must have borne his own cross.

"The mark of rank in nature is capacity for pain,
And the anguish of the singer makes the beauty of the strain."

This may seem too severe a teaching for common life, yet it is verified almost every day. Sometimes one wants to help a friend who is in sore trouble, but somehow he cannot reach the heart of the need. There is a barrier which good intentions cannot cross. What is the matter with this ineffective kindliness? The matter is that the helper has not shared the experience which he wants to help. He is trying to reach by advice or sym-

pathy or philosophy what can be touched by nothing else but experience of the same need. And so it happens that some other life, which has not half so much eloquence or learning, simply because it has borne the same trouble and emerged into some degree of victory, is able to reach across the silence with its hand, and the life in trouble says: "This man has borne his own cross, and so he is able to help me to bear mine." Raise that capacity for suffering to its highest power and you approach the religion of the cross of Christ. Jesus might have done all the great deeds and said all the great words reported of him, and yet have remained a teacher and preacher instead of a Saviour. What draws the world to him is not the height of his genius, but the depth of his experience.

> "Christ leads me through no darker rooms
> Than he went through before."

His cross is the symbol, not only of humiliation, but also of salvation. The day of the cross is not merely the commemoration of a historic tragedy, but the illumination of life by the experience of tragedy. To learn to serve, one must learn to suffer. To learn the law of service, one must learn the lesson of the cross.

LXI

THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE

Hebrews vii. 16.

(Passion Week, Saturday.)

"NOT after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." The contrast is between two kinds of motives. A law is an outward regulation, a power is an inward force. Some lives are moved by external influences, as a sailing vessel is moved by a favoring breeze; other lives are moved by an interior power, as a steamship is moved by its own engine. The word used here in the Greek is that from which we derive our words "dynamo" and "dynamic." Thus the sense of immortality is described as a dynamic. An endless life is a form of power, moving men from within, and distinguishable from the laws and customs of the world.

This contrast indicates the two ways in which the commemoration of Easter may be approached. Immortality may be regarded either as a problem or as a power. One may

ask concerning the eternal life: "How shall I explain it; how may it be proved?" and these are legitimate and timely questions. Another and a better way to approach the mystery, however, is to utilize what this passage calls "the power of an endless life," the dynamic of immortality. The old theologians used to speak of "practising the presence of God." There is such a thing also as "practising the presence of immortality;" living, that is to say, as if one were an immortal soul. One may deal with the power of the endless life as we deal with that power which we call electricity. Men have studied it, have feared it, have made a toy of it, have wondered at it; and at last it has occurred to them that, though they might not understand its nature, they might set it at work, to move and warm and light the world. In the same way immortality, though it may remain a mystery, may be utilized as a power. Suppose one should say to himself: "I do not pretend to answer all the questions which may be asked about immortality; but I propose to live, so far as I can, according to what a man of science would call the hypothesis of the eternal life. Ignorant as I am of immor-

tality, I will try the great experiment of living as though I had an immortal soul. I will try to think and act as though I were not going to die." Would not that be a great enrichment of one's resources, a clarifying of one's thought, and a purifying of one's choices and desires? Nor is this all. For, as a rule, it happens that through the endless life thus used as a power comes the answer to the endless life as a problem. The most convincing proof of immortality is to see a life which has about it this quality of immortality. In one's home or among one's friends we come to know a soul which does not seem likely to die. It has what has been called the "quality of timelessness;" it is living by the power of the endless life; and the truth of the endless life becomes through it natural and near. What chiefly obstructs faith in immortality is what the Apostle calls the law of a carnal commandment. We have not been living the immortal life and therefore we cannot believe in it. To practise the presence of immortality is to discover its truth. The dynamic of faith is the power of an endless life.

LXII

THE SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING

Psalm cxvi. 17.

(Thanksgiving Day.)

"I WILL offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving." Is it possible, then, that thanksgiving may be a sacrifice? Is it sometimes a difficult duty to express one's thanks, so that a sacrificial quality enters into one's recognition of kindness? Of course this is not always true. Many people find it the easiest thing in the world to be thankful. They are often too profuse in their gratitude. It is not a sacrifice to them, but rather a luxury, to express appreciation. They make up in gratitude what we should like to have them put into effort. Gratitude, as has been said of such a person, is little more than a sense of favors to come. To some persons, on the other hand, it is by no means easy to feel grateful for things as they are. They live in the future, they are expectant and sanguine. A man's life, they say, consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth,

but in the abundance of the things which he does not possess and wants to. They welcome such texts as: "Ask, and ye shall receive," "Knock, and it shall be opened," but they do not naturally repeat such texts as: "I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving." There are, still further, many persons, and some of the very best of people, who find the expression of obligation one of the hardest of experiences. They like to do for others, but they do not like to have others do for them. They have failed to attain one of the finest graces of life, the grace of receiving kindness. They are poor and do not want to be patronized; they are proud and do not want to be receiving favors; and so they stand over against the world in an attitude of defiant self-respect, asking help from no one and owing gratitude to none. What, however, is the truth about this attempt to lead an independent and self-sustaining life? The truth is that no life can be thus free from obligation. Back of all that the strongest and bravest can do or can get, there is a region of experience where we are sheer receivers, dependent upon our neighbors, the social order, and the purposes of God. The fundamental fact of human

life, one great theologian has taught, is the sense of dependence. To imagine one's self unindebted is to leave much of one's experience unexplained. The chief resources of every life are unearned and undeserved, free gifts from the Universe; and the first thought with which a reasonable man should begin his day is the thought of the unappreciated and unrecognized blessings which flow in upon him like the light. A few years ago there lived in this neighborhood one of the most gifted of American poets, who had been smitten by a lingering disease, and whose whole later life was a struggle against pain and death. He seemed to have little for which to be thankful; his ambitions were thwarted, he died obscure; and yet few verses can equal his in their comprehensive recognition of the bounty of the Universe. His habitual life-offering was the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

"Ask and receive, 't is sweetly said,
Yet what to plead for know I not,
For wish is worsted, hope o'ersped
And aye to thanks returns my thought.
If I would pray, I 've naught to say
But this, that God may be God still;
For Him to live is still to give,
And greater than my wish His will.
All mine is thine, the Sky-Soul saith,

The wealth I am must thou become,
  Richer and richer; breath by breath,
Immortal gain, immortal room.
  And since all His mine also is,
Life's gift outruns my fancy far,
  And drowns my dream in larger stream,
As morning drinks the morning-star."

LXIII

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Matthew vii. 29.

(CHRISTMAS.)

"HE taught them as one having authority." It is certainly very remarkable that the narrator of the Sermon on the Mount was primarily impressed, not so much by its wonderful sayings, as by the way in which they were said. It was not the matter of the Sermon which he first of all wanted to report, but its manner. It was the manner of one having authority. Jesus did not set himself to prove that the pure in heart were to see God, or that the peacemakers were to be blessed. He announced these great propositions with authority, and, as the Gospel later says, those who had ears to hear might hear. What was the nature of this authority in Jesus Christ? It is certainly very different from what passed as authority then, — the manner of the Pharisees; and quite different from the authority of a modern philosopher or theologian or logician. It was a self-evidencing

and original authority, like that of the artist or the poet. When a great musician desires to express his mind, he does not argue or convince, but utters himself in the language of his art, and those who have ears to hear recognize his authority. It is the same with Jesus Christ. He teaches, not as a disputant but as a seer, not by the logical method but by the lyrical method. The parables are in their nature poetry; they do not dictate truth, they suggest it; and one of the chief obstacles to the appreciation of the Christian religion is the fact that where it addresses the imagination it has been interpreted by the reason, and where it is essentially poetry it has been explained as prose.

Here is the characteristic of Christianity which meets us at the Christmas season. For once in a year we are delivered from the dogmatics and apologetics of Christianity, and are willing to receive the lyric revelation. It is natural at Christmas-time to explain one's meaning in a story. Once upon a time, then, in an ancient church, there was a great organ on which the people had not yet learned to play. One after another tried the instrument, drew out its stops and wakened some

of its harmonies; but none of them dreamed of the wonderful music which lay hidden there. Then one day came the Master, sat like other men before the organ, and began to play; and the people below hushed themselves and whispered: "Is this the organ which we have owned so long — this which first sighs and weeps, and then thrills with passion and joy?" From that day the hope of their worship was to reproduce the music which was then revealed, and when the best of them did his best, they said: "This makes us think of the Master's playing." Just such an instrument is human life, with its complex mechanism, its possible discords, its hidden harmonies, and many a philosopher and teacher has drawn from within it something of the music which was there. Then one day comes the Master. He knows, as the Gospel says, what is in man, and bending over human life, reveals the music of it; and from that day forth, the hope of the world has been to reproduce the harmony; and when the best of men do their best, we say: "This makes us think of the Master's playing."

LXIV

THE RELIGION OF THE WILL

John vii. 17.

THERE has been much debate among the learned concerning the psychology of religion; and scholars have compared the reason, the emotions, and the will, as elements in religious experience. Do we in religion, first of all, think, or feel, or act? Some teachers have urged that the essence of religion must be found in thought. Right thinking is the foundation of a saving faith. The truth makes one free. Who is the Christian? It is he who has been taught the truth about God, Christ, the Church, and the Christian creed. Other teachers have regarded the emotions as the fundamental element in religious experience. Behind all doctrines of theology, they say, lies the religious sentiment itself, and this feeling of dependence supplants all necessity of proof. Who is the Christian? It is he who has been thus deeply stirred by the emotion of religion. "The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Now, no doubt, there is much to say in behalf of both rationalism and mysticism. A definite theology and a profound emotion are essential parts of a complete religious life. Yet when we turn to the teaching of Jesus, we observe an extraordinary emphasis on the third element of consciousness, the will. "My meat," he says, "is to do the will of Him that sent me." "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, . . . the same is my brother and sister;" and still more strongly in this verse from the fourth Gospel: "If any man will to do His will, he shall know of the teaching." However important it may be to have a creed that is sound or an emotion that is warm, the Christian life, according to the Gospels, is primarily determined by the direction of the will, the fixing of the desire, the habit of obedience, the faculty of decision. When a modern psychologist says that "The willing-department of life dominates both the thinking-department and the feeling-department," he is in fact but repeating the great words: "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching." Here is the aspect of the religious life which gives courage and hope to many a consciously imperfect experience. You are not sure about

your creed? That is a pity. You do not respond to the emotion of the revivalist or the poet? That also is a loss. But, after all, the fundamental question concerns the discipline of your will. Are you determined in your purpose? Have you the will to do the will? Then, even with half a creed and less than half a pious ecstasy, you are at least in the line of the purpose of Jesus Christ, and as you will to do the will, may come some day to know the teaching. "Obedience," said Frederick Robertson, "is the organ of spiritual knowledge." First the discipline of the will; then the truth which lies beyond that ethical decision. Our thoughts may grow breathless as they climb; our emotions may ebb as they flow; but our wills may march steadily up the heights of life, or flow steadily through the experiences of life as a river seeks the sea. The profoundest modern statement of Christian faith is the confession of Tennyson:—

> "Our wills are ours, we know not how,
> Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

LXV

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

John xvi. 13.

IT is well to pause now and then in the busy pursuit of education and to ask one's self what it is that makes an educated man. Evidently one may know a great many things and not be liberally educated. I may understand all mysteries and all knowledge, says the Apostle, and yet it may profit me nothing. Who, then, is the scholar? It is he to whom there has come, in the words of the Gospel, "the spirit of truth." He has acquired the scientific temper, the scholar's habit of mind, the instinct for sound reasoning. "The scholar," said Fichte, "is the priest of truth." He ministers before the truth as before an altar. The spirit of truth is like a key which fits the successive doors of truth as the scholar approaches them.

And who, again, is the good man? It is not he who has learned all the maxims and rules of goodness, but he who has acquired an instinct for righteousness, like the schol-

ar's instinct for truth. One may commit to memory the best of text-books on ethics and not be a good man. The courage of a soldier is not reached by argument; it is the trained instinct of loyalty and obedience which makes it more natural to advance than to retreat; or, as one soldier has said, "makes one afraid to run away." The refinement of a woman is not acquired by the study of social rules. She repels the vulgar as instinctively as she shrinks from the flame. It is the same with any life which is morally safe. It has a distaste for the base or vicious. The spirit of truth has come to it and guides it into all truth.

And who, once more, is the Christian? It is not he who is simply well instructed in the doctrines of the faith. One may have an indisputably correct creed and be no Christian; or, on the other hand, as the first disciples felt when Jesus was about to die, one may have an humbling sense of the insufficiency of his faith and yet be a Christian. "We know not whither thou goest," says Thomas; "Shew us the Father," says Philip; but Jesus answers, "When He, the spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all

truth." Christian faith is thus an attitude of spiritual responsiveness, a habit of obedience, an instinct of loyalty. The definition by John Wesley, in 1742, of the faith of a Methodist is an equally noble definition of the faith of a Christian. "The distinguishing marks of a Methodist," he said, "are not his opinions of any sort. His assenting to this or that scheme of religion, his embracing any particular set of notions, his espousing the judgment of one man or another, are all quite wide of the point. . . . Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thine? I ask no further question. Dost thou love and serve God? It is enough. I give thee the right hand of fellowship." If, that is to say, a man has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his, and if he has that spirit, then Jesus assures him that he has in his hand the key which will open each door of the great house of experience and guide him to all the truth he needs.

LXVI

THE REWARD OF LIFE

Luke x. 28.

ONE mark of candor and common sense in the New Testament is its recognition of rewards. It does not say, "Act without reference to consequences; do good without desire of reward." It says, on the contrary, "Your reward shall be great; he shall in no wise lose his reward." It goes still farther, for it says that wrongdoing also shall have its rewards. Even of the Pharisees and hypocrites it announces: "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." There is nothing mystical or extravagant or unreasonable in the law of Christian conduct. But what is the reward of the consecrated life? Obviously it is not the reward of appreciation or tranquillity or outward success. It would have been difficult for Jesus to preach any such doctrine of reward when his own career was so unappreciated, stormy, and apparently defeated. The reward of conduct in the New Testament is in conduct it-

self. It is not superimposed on conduct, but grows out of conduct as a flower grows out of its stalk. In short, the reward of life is life. "This do," says Jesus, "and thou shalt live." A man, for example, lives his physical life as rationally as he can. He disciplines and fortifies his body. What is his reward? He may gain athletic distinction or prizes, or he may fail to gain them; for these rewards are the accidents of his life. The only sure reward of his physical development is that physical development itself. He has trained his life and he receives more life. What, again, is the reward of a man who does his duty? Is it credit, or admiration, or appreciation? These again are incidents of experience. Sometimes one gets these results when he has not done his duty, and sometimes when he has done his duty, he gets neither one of them. The essential and inherent reward of duty-doing is the ability to do one's duty better. Out of the duty done opens the way to larger duties. One has been faithful over a few things, and he becomes able to rule over many things. The reward of duty done is more duty to do; just as the reward of work is more work; and the reward of sinning is more sin. Finally, the Book of

Revelation describes a man who is faithful even unto death, and receives as his reward a crown. And what is this crown which is his reward? It is not a crown of gold or gems, but a crown of life. The reward of faithfulness unto death is the gift of increased life, and to receive that gift is to enter heaven. The man has heard the great command, "This do, and thou shalt *live;*" and as he proceeds from one to another sphere of service, he discovers how rich a reward life itself may be

LXVII

THE THINGS THAT CANNOT BE SHAKEN

Hebrews xii. 27.

SOME of you, no doubt, can recall the experience of an earthquake. I do not mean one of the little tremblings which we sometimes feel in New England, but a real quaking of the solid ground, with its sidelong, sickening motion, and the hurried rush of people into the open air. The New Testament bears the marks of being written in a country familiar with these shattering and overwhelming moments. "I shake," says this Epistle, "not the earth only, but also heaven . . . that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." The New Testament is the product also of an earthquake period in history, when dynasties, philosophies, and faiths were tottering and crumbling on every hand, and there was "a removing of those things that are shaken." It is interesting to notice, however, the extraordinary composure with which such a time is met by this Christian writer.

"Let things shake," he says. "This is just the time when men will discriminate between the flimsy and the solid. The removing of those things which can be shaken will show what are the things which may remain." "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken," he concludes, "let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God."

It is a note of Christian confidence with which one should greet the present age. This is a time when things are being shaken as never before perhaps since the days of Paul. Opinions, institutions, creeds, the very organization of society, are being tested as a tree is tested by an autumn gale, and the branches which are rotten fall with a crash. A visitor at the Paris Exposition reported that he was much impressed by the solid stateliness of the stone gateway to the Russian building, until he was tempted to try his pocket-knife on what seemed granite columns, and the knife went through and stuck in a lathe. That is the way in which many structures of modern thought, which have seemed substantial, give way when one leans against them or tests them with the knife of criticism. The voice of the time

shakes not the earth only, but also heaven, and removes the things that can be shaken.

How, then, shall the Christian regard an earthquake time? Some people think that everything is going to ruin, and they throw themselves down in despair. Other people think that everything must be propped up, and all must stand or fall together. If, they say, you begin by doubting one belief, everything will go. To the Christian, however, a time of shaking is precious as a time of discriminating. This is the time to distinguish the weak things from the strong. The very storm that blows down what is unsubstantial reveals that which cannot be moved. One of the most impressive sights in the Oriental world is a great temple, standing where there has been an earthquake. All about are the ruins of villages, and among these ruins are some fragments of the temple itself, which have been shaken off. Above the ruins, however, still rise the great solemn arches and columns, unshaken and unharmed, not buttressed by added supports, not even cemented together, but erect in their inherent stability, and looking down for thousands of years on the disasters which have overwhelmed the things that can be removed. That is the

way truth stands before the Christian. There may not be so much of it as men at first had built, but what there is left was built to stay. What impresses the beholder is not so much the quantity of truth as its quality. It stands there, a monument to permanence in a world of change, and the very shaking of those things which can be removed gives new dignity to those things which cannot be shaken.

LXVIII

THE HYPOCRITIC DAYS

John iv. 10.

THIS saying of Jesus is full of an extraordinary and appealing pathos. He has met this woman by the well, and has spoken to her the sublimest words which even he ever uttered; and then it seems to occur to him that what he has said means to her nothing at all. He speaks of the living water, and she thinks it must be some spring which will save her the trouble of coming to the well; he speaks of her own life, and she thinks he is a fortune-teller, and reports to her friends that he has told her all she ever did. How poignant and self-revealing, then, is the word of Jesus: "If thou knewest the gift of God." If, he seems to say, you could but understand before it is too late what has been offered to you, what questions you would ask and what comfort you might receive! To have had one's chance and let it slip, to have sat with the Master and not to have known it, to have believed the day one of

commonplace and routine, when it was really the great day of your whole life, — what can be sadder than that! And yet, that is what might happen to any one any day. No one can be sure what day may be eventful or decisive. What could be more unlikely than that this dull woman, trudging out over the hot sand to the well, should be remembered for two thousand years! What could be more improbable than that the dusty stranger sitting on the curb should speak the greatest words of human history! And what could one more regret than to have his chance and never to know it till it was gone! A day dawns like other days, and one looks past it for some more eventful moment and some larger task; but as one trudges with his daily load along the shadeless path to the familiar well, the spirit of the Master may meet him, and the chance of life arrive, and the dulness of one's heart alone prevent one's acceptance of the gift of God. When Emerson speaks of "the hypocritic days," he means, not that they dissemble or deceive, but that their purposes are masked, like the face of an ancient actor, so that one may easily miss their intention and refuse their best gifts.

Mornings in the College Chapel

"Daughters of time, the hypocritic days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleachèd garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn."

LXIX

TESTING THE LAMPS

Ephesians vi. 13.

RELIGION, according to this passage, is not only a form of defence, but a form of precaution. One should take the whole armor of God, not only to withstand the enemy in the evil day, but also that, having done all, one may stand. A good soldier, that is to say, has his armor always near. He is on his defence when the enemy is before him, but he is also on his guard lest he be taken unawares. There is the peril of adversity, — the risk of cowardice; and there is also the peril of prosperity, — the risk of unpreparedness. Each of these risks should be considered when one enlists for the moral war. Some people are beaten in open fight by the force of sin. They cannot withstand in the evil day. Other people, who may be brave when they face an enemy, are caught some day with their armor off, and captured by strategy when they could not have been taken by force.

When an electric car approaches a steam railway-crossing, you may, in some cities, see the conductor enter and turn on the lights. Why does he do this? It is not to give more light, for it is done in broad day. It is not to keep the car moving, for the car is moving as it is done. It is, I am told, for precaution. The rule of the company is peremptory that before crossing a track the power shall be tested and found sufficient. The force is applied, not as a motive, but as a safeguard. It is as though the conductor heard the great word: "Watch therefore, with your lamps burning, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." A great part of one's religious life is in the same way a kind of testing of the lamps, not for immediate need, but for precaution against risks. The discipline of prosperity prepares for the unforeseen emergency. The armor which can withstand in the evil day must be ready before it is to be used. The power which is to save from destruction must be turned on every day. When, therefore, a young man slips in here of a morning to say his quiet prayer, it is not because some great temptation is immediately threatening him and that he immediately needs the whole

armor of God, but because any day his test may arrive, and he does not want to be found defenceless. He is testing the lamps lest they suddenly fail. He will withstand in the evil day, because every day, like a soldier at his post, steady and ready, he stands.

LXX

TEMPLES OF GOD

1 *Corinthians* iii. 16.

THIS splendid passage makes its appeal to the noblest of human motives, the motive of honor. Your life, it says, was meant to be holy, like a temple of God. You must therefore reverence yourself. You are entitled to self-respect. "*Noblesse oblige.*" Your heritage as a child of God becomes your obligation as a servant of man. When, however, this high doctrine is offered to a plain, ordinary man, may he not reasonably answer, "This is not for me. This may be true for sages and saints, but there is little in my life of which a temple of God could be built. To speak of my character and circumstances as sacred is as though one should call his tenement a villa, or his cottage a castle. My insignificant and transitory life is more like a tent set up for a night's refuge than a temple consecrated forever. Are not those famous philosophers right who teach me to

think of myself, not with self-respect, but with self-scorn?"

What is it, then, which justifies to people like ourselves a restoration of self-respect? It is certainly not our achievements or attainments or intrinsic nobility of nature. It is, according to this passage, the association of our insignificant lives with the purposes of the Eternal. It is not that you have acquired the Spirit of God, but that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. There is a capacity in human life for spiritual receptivity, and this potential quality gives dignity to the most self-distrustful experience. A temple is built of stones, and as these blocks lie in the quarry, unhewn and shapeless, they may well fancy that no material could be less adapted to a spiritual temple than their rough, hard mass. Then comes the builder, and looking at the quarry says: "This is just the stone I need, straight-grained and clean. My work shall abide because I have found this stone, and I shall receive a reward." A temple, again, is adorned with precious windows made of an infinite number of bits of glass, and these fragments, too, may seem to themselves hopelessly broken and inapplicable. Then comes

the artist and shapes these fragments into a picture and sets it in the South side of the temple, where the light illuminates the altar of God, and the glass has significance and dignity as it contributes to the beautiful whole. It is the same with a human life. What significance it has comes of its having a place in the temple of God. "The lively stones," as the Apostle calls them, are set in their place; the light shines through the lives of men; and the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

LXXI

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Ephesians iv. 13.

WE hear much in these days of Christian unity, and many councils and programmes are proposing to heal the differences which divide the Church, and to attain what the Apostle calls the "unity of the faith." Sometimes this unity is sought by the way of conquest, and one communion undertakes to absorb or repress all others. It does not seem likely, however, that this absorption or repression will succeed. Different aspects of teaching will, it seems probable, continue to attract different types of mind. Again, this unity is sought by the way of legislation, and ecclesiastical conventions vote terms of agreement and discriminate between the essentials and non-essentials of unity. The more, however, they debate, the more they recall attention to forgotten points of difference, and the further they seem to be from Christian unity. How, then, is this dream of the unity of the faith to be realized? It must be reached,

according to St. Paul, not by absorption or by legislation, but by growth. Speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head. It is not a unity which can be patched up, but one into which we must grow up. It is not a matter of deliberation, but a matter of elevation. The divisive elements of religion are below, like the underbrush in the valley over which one cannot see. Get above this level and the view is clear. Christian controversy thrives in the malarious jungle of the lower ground, and as men get on higher ground, they not only breathe more easily, but they get together, not by compromise or concession, but because they are attaining unto the perfect man. Here is the reason for the curious fact that there is no heresy or schism in a hymn-book. Persons who would not perhaps be permitted to worship together become through their hymns participants in common worship and their names stand side by side on the same page. With no sense of concession or compromise we sing the hymns of Wesley the Methodist, Newman the Anglican, and Whittier the Quaker. It is because all of them dwell on the heights. The unity which their hymns illustrate is not one of agreement,

but one of attainment. It is not that they have assented to one opinion, but that they have ascended to one view. The religious life is like climbing a mountain from different sides. Below there is limitation, obstruction, division. One cannot see far, and his neighbor calls to him and is not heard. "Follow me," one says to another; "I have found the only path," but meantime the other is pressing up what seems a better way. As each gets higher, however, he sees farther, and the paths converge, and when at last each approaches the top, he approaches his neighbor, and on the summit it is all one view, and it is a view all round.

LXXII

THE COMING OF THE LORD

Mark xiii. 34.

THE first Christians were deeply affected in their thought and teaching by the belief that their Lord was quickly to come again and judge the earth. How they came to believe this, whether it was a misinterpretation of such sayings as "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled," whether it was a Jewish tradition inherited by the new Church, — these are questions which need not be debated here. It is sufficient to notice that this belief in the Second Coming kept the early Christians in an expectant, alert, not to say feverish, state of mind. They were to live with their loins girded and their lamps burning, waiting for their Lord, lest coming suddenly he find them sleeping. All this may well appear to have encouraged an excitable and even fanatical tendency from which we are happily set free. Yet, in abandoning this faith in the visible coming of the Lord, is there not some

chance of forgetting the spiritual crises which are inevitably to happen, and for which this teaching of Jesus bids us make ready? Are there not exigencies of the soul, which are likely to occur very soon in every life, and about which Jesus would say quite as solemnly as of the coming of the millennium: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is"? To a man of middle life, one of the most extraordinary facts of youth is its capacity to make things which are really very near seem a great way off. Life as one looks forward to it seems very long, but as one looks back upon it, extremely short. Old people look through a glass which draws things near to them, and young people through a glass which pushes things away.

Consider, for instance, the life of a young man who is this year a candidate for his bachelor's degree. He has been at the University three or four years. What is going to happen to him in the next three or four years? In less time than has elapsed since he was a Freshman he will in all probability have made the great decision of his use of life. From that time his work will grow more specialized and shut in, and he will be happy only as his work

is large enough to hold his heart. How is he approaching that grave decision? Is he drifting toward it, or steering? Is he remaining a boy through these happy years of college life, or is he becoming a man? Is life to take him by surprise, or has he heard the warning: "Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is"? Life goes on with this young man, and again in less time than the period since he began to prepare for college, he will in all probability come to love a pure woman, and will desire of all things to offer her a chaste body and a clean heart. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven." A year or two more slip by, and this young man becomes the father of a child, and discovers that no human happiness can be so great as the assurance that self-control and vigor of mind and body are reproduced in one's own child, while no human misery can be keener than to confess to one's self that one's own child is cursed by a physical or moral weakness derived from him. It is not necessary to go farther. If you should examine the records of our college classes, you would find that about ten years after graduation — a period not longer than that since you entered a preparatory school —

brings one to a point where one man in sixteen of his own class will be dead. These are cold facts, which need not be colored with a word of rhetoric. Among the many uncertainties of experience these are incidents which one may reasonably anticipate, and they are quite as solemn as any coming of the Lord in glory to judge the earth. Indeed, these events are the real expressions of God's judgment, — a judgment which one has to confess is just, and a judgment which comes upon one abruptly, with a solemn and sometimes a tragic surprise. A man goes out into life, as Jesus said, like a sower going forth to sow, and his conscience is the sickle with which he cuts the harvest of life and reaps what he has sown. Watch, therefore, for ye know not when the Master cometh and maketh a reckoning with you!

LXXIII

THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF CHRISTIANITY

1 Corinthians iii. 22.

NOTICE, in this passage, the splendid comprehensiveness of the Christian claim. All things, says the Apostle, are yours. Nothing lies outside the sphere of the Christian religion. The field, as Jesus himself said, is the world. All life is holy. There is no distinction of sacred from profane. Paul, Apollos, and Cephas represented what we call the sects of the Church; but these sects are not alternatives from which one has to choose. They are all yours. The sects are, as it were, cross-sections through the life of the growing Church. Each is true when seen, as it were, crosswise, but each is partial in its relation to the expanding growth. They are all yours, if ye are Christ's. You are not ensnared in the pettiness of denominationalism. You repeat the great confession: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." Nor is it the Church alone that is yours. The

world also, with its industry and wealth, its poverty and care, — this too is yours. Christianity is a world-religion. The Christian is, in the true sense, a man of the world. And life also, with all its work and play, its joy and pain, — this too is yours. "I am the way," said Jesus. The first title given to the Christian religion was "The Way." Christianity is a way of life. And death also is yours, with its pain and mystery. This is the victory which overcometh death, even your faith. And things present are yours; the world is to you not decadent or hopeless. The Christian is an optimist, not with that easy assurance which refuses to see evil, but with that understanding of life which justifies his judgment that —

> "Step by step since time began
> We see the steady gain of man."

And finally, things to come are yours; the creation of the better future, the realization of the idealist's dream. We are saved by hope. "Greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father," said the Master.

I may be permitted for once to make this a personal message. This is the last day of

my service as Preacher to the University, and it brings me to the end of a term of twenty years of happy privilege. It is bewildering and humiliating enough to think of the multitude of things of which in all these years of opportunity I have so hastily spoken; but out of this long series there rises at the close this culminating truth of the comprehensiveness of the Christian life. The most pressing peril which besets religious people, I feel sure, is not that of flagrant sins or of intellectual denials, but the peril of provincialism; the danger of mistaking a great subject for a small one, and of side-tracking one's religion on some special switch of experience, as though it were a way-station instead of a terminus. Life is not like an ocean steamship, divided by water-tight bulkheads into different sections, in one of which we do our work, and in the other of which we say our prayers. Either the whole of a man is religious, or none of him. A departmentalized, ecclesiasticized, provincialized religion is the first evidence of a decadent Church. A distinguished American politician in a heated campaign is said to have telegraphed to his friends: "Claim everything." That, in a much profounder sense,